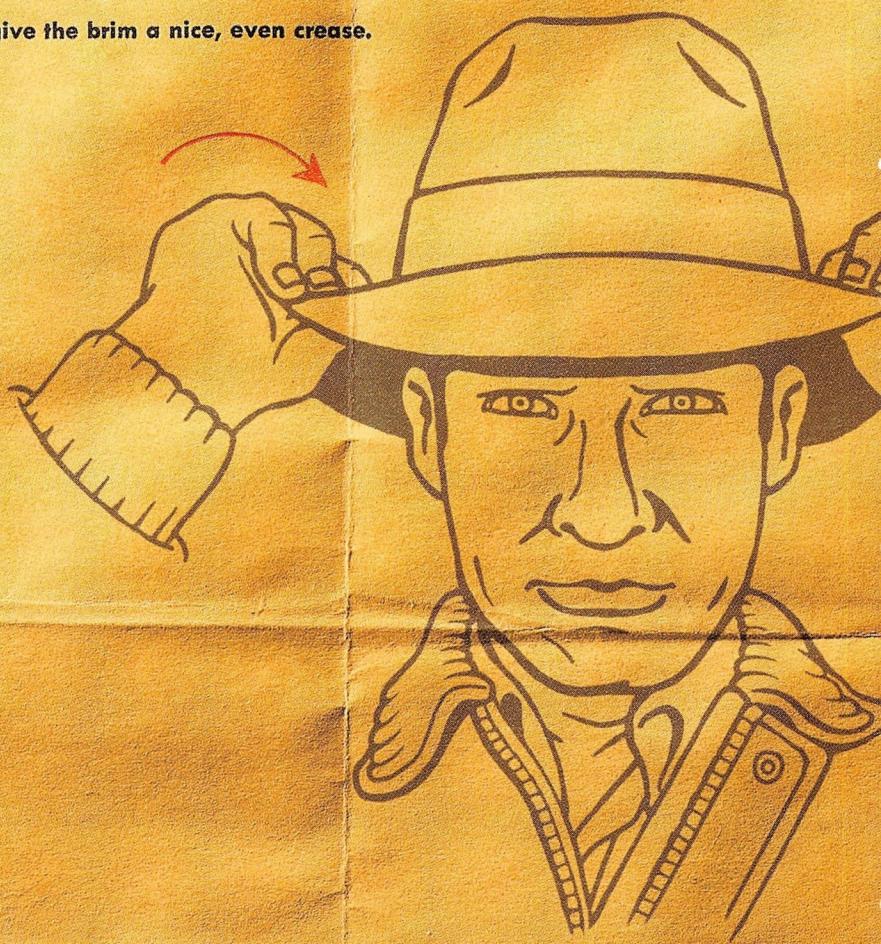


HOW TO BREAK IN A FEDORA:



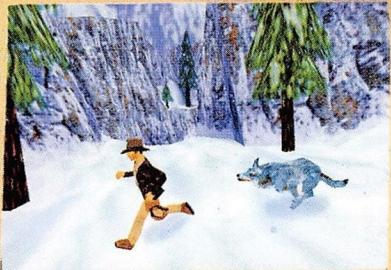
1 Make sure each side of the crown has a smooth, curved indent.

2 For a look that says you've got places to go and bad guys to hurt, give the brim a nice, even crease.

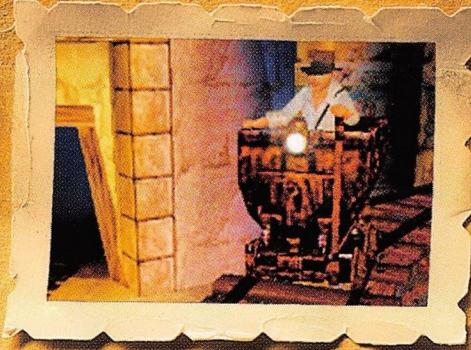


EXPERT METHODS:

④ Canine chew toy.



⑤ Mine shaft wind shear.



⑥ High altitude bridge-hopping.



From the mountains of Kazakhstan to the ruins of the Olmecs. It's 17 chapters

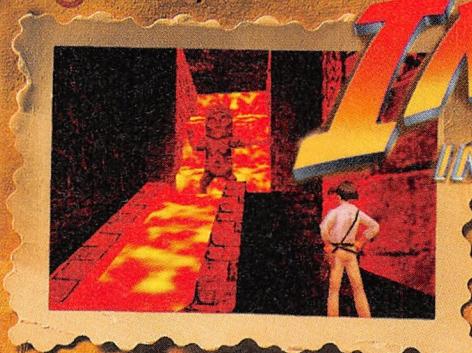


③ Never, under any circumstances, turn the
brim up. Remember, you want to look like a
stud archaeologist, not some guy named Cletus.

⑦ Raging H₂O soaks.



⑧ Lava vapor treatments.



INDIANA JONES

and the
INFERNAL MACHINE™

indy.lucasarts.com



of epic, blood-pumping adventure — and the hat never falls off. Indy's back.

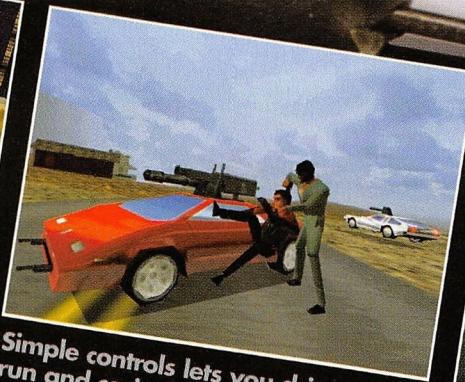
CF12421 39881 89



I feel safest off all...



Wage auto combat in immense worlds—even Vegas, baby.



Simple controls lets you drive, run and carjack with ease.



Battle through multi-level indoor/outdoor car-nage.

Activision is a registered trademark and Interstate '76 and Interstate '82 are trademarks of Activision, Inc. © 1998 Activision, Inc.
All rights reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

www.activision.com

ACTIVISION®



Features
3 exclusive tracks
by 80's Super-group
DEVO!

It's the only way to live. In cars.

INTERSTATE 185™

A different kind
of shooter.



It's the new wave of action
in the Interstate universe.

PC
CD
ROM

MA15+
Low Level
Animated Violence

PC PowerPlay

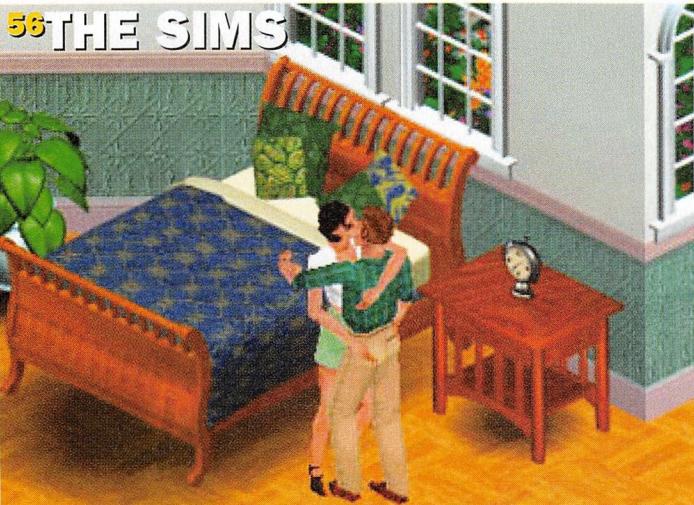
CONTENTS

ISSUE 44 JANUARY 2000

34 GAME OF THE CENTURY

This is the big one. The most comprehensive round-up of the 50 titles that have made PC gaming what it is today. If you haven't played them all, then you're not a real gamer.

50		48		46	
40		44			
25		32		31	
15		23		26	
10		19		18	
5		14		13	
10		9		7	
5		4		3	
2				?	



9 Editorial

Hope you liked the all new grey strip last month. Who knows what exciting colour it'll be this time?

10 CD Guide

Now with two - that's TWO! - CDs every issue. Double your fun and other cheesy slogans. How appropriate.

16 Game News

Duke Nukem still exists - and we have the photos to prove it; the Blair Witch Project and Evil Dead appear to terrify gamers worldwide.

22 Game of the Year

GOTY is back! Vote for the best games of the year in a million different categories.

28 Spotlight

Shielding their eyes from the almighty glare this month we have Motocross Madness 2, Crimson Skies, Starlancer, Thief 2, and Rally Masters.

PREVIEWS

- 48 Diablo II
- 52 Final Fantasy VIII
- 54 Colin McRae Rally 2
- 55 Grand Prix World
- 56 The Sims

58 The Score List

61 Review Contents

100 Retroversion

Brett Robinson has no friends, but he made some virtual ones in Starsiege Tribes.

56 THE SIMS

GAMEPLAY

102 The Oracle

The Sage's gaming wisdom, plus Code for all the cheats out there

106 Homeworld Guide

Enrol in Commander Dewhurst's Starfleet Academy.

TECH

114 Tech News

All the latest happenings in the world of silicon.

118 Hotware

Our experts cast their eyes over a bunch of things you stick inside your PC.

124 Setup

Doc Ash will see you now.

ONLINE

128 Net Game News

Warcraft II Battlenetted, Thief III rumoured, Asheron's Call playtested, and Team Fortress 2 interviewed.

140 Letters

We changed the name to In-Box last month. Do you like it? It was nearly going to be Lettuce...

144 Competitions

Previous competition winners have gone on to triumph in games of Trivial Pursuit.

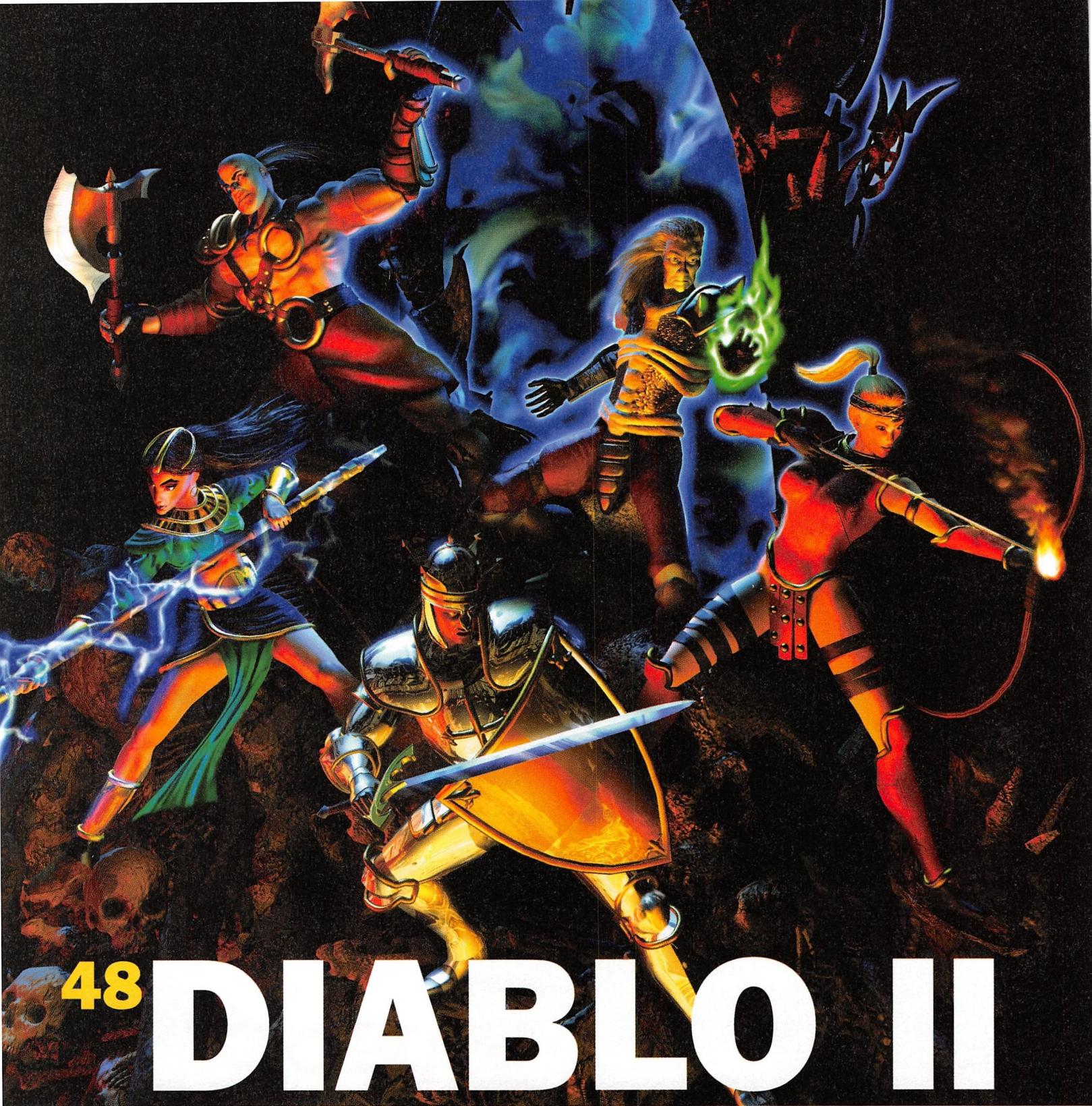
145 Next Month

Hey, this crystal ball isn't so bad after all. Maybe we should hang onto it for a little while..

146 Read Error

To balance out all those great games elsewhere this issue, here's a bunch that really sucked.





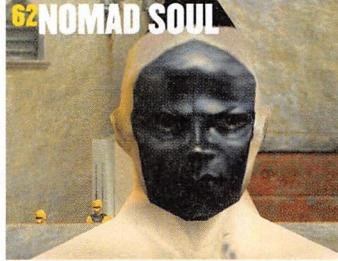
48

DIABLO II

ISSUE 44 REVIEWS

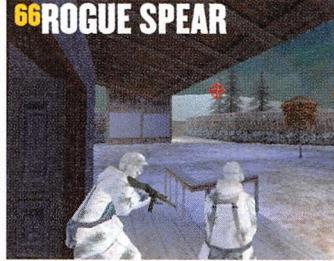
62 Omikron: The Nomad Soul
66 Rainbow 6: Rogue Spear
70 Gabriel Knight 3
72 Nations: Fighter Command

62 NOMAD SOUL



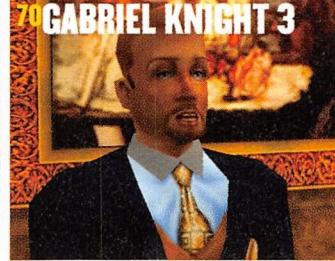
74 Seven Kingdoms 2
76 NASCAR 3
78 I-War Deluxe: Defiance
80 Abomination
82 Grand Theft Auto 2

66 ROGUE SPEAR



84 MS Flight Sim 2000
86 Jane's USAF
88 Freespace 2
90 Shadow Company
91 Su27 II

70 GABRIEL KNIGHT 3



92 Traitor's Gate
94 Fox Sports NBA 2000
96 EA Sports Madden 2000
98 Links 2000

82 GTA 2



**Do you Yahoo!?
Have you seen the difference with...**

**ViewSonic®
on top!**

When you're surfing Yahoo!®, you want the biggest and brightest images you can get. Which is exactly why you should Yahoo!® with the ViewSonic M50. It offers brilliant color, and defined images.

With spectacular specs like 0.27mm dot pitch, a resolution of 1024x768 at 87Hz flicker-free refresh rate and integrated front facing speakers microphone eliminating desktop clutter with external speakers or microphone. ViewSonic M50 provides high contrast screen for sharp, crisp image.

At ViewSonic, we developed the M50 for personal and business use. It is perfect for graphics, Internet surfing, music and educational use including computer-based training. It's TCO '92 and '99 certified. By putting ViewSonic M50 on top of your priority list, you'll ensure your Visual Computing™ experience to be excellent.

For more information call ViewSonic at
Asia Pacific Sales: Tel:886-2-2248-4072, Fax:886-2-2240-8238

Technical Support (Australia) Toll Free 1-800-880-818
E-Mail:sirc@ozemail.com.au

Authorized Distributors:

Chips & Bits Tel: (02) 9680-9600, Tel: (03) 9696-1911,
Tel: (07) 3277-0599, Tel: (08) 8359-3555,
Tel: (08) 9228-0088

Ingram Micro Tel: (02) 9741-2000, Tel: (07) 3846-2882,
Tel: 1300653333, Tel: (08) 9445-1511,

Daltron Electronics (Papua New Guinea)
Tel: 675-3256766

Copyright ©1999 ViewSonic Corporation, all rights reserved. Corporate names and trademarks stated herein are the property of their respective companies. Intel and the Intel Inside logo are registered trademark of Intel.



YAHOO!®

(PC Sold Separately)



**ViewSonic
on top™**

www.ViewSonic.com

Editor: Ben Mansill
ben@next.com.au
Deputy Editor: March Stepnik
march@next.com.au
Staff Writer: David Wildgoose
david@next.com.au
Art Director: Malcolm Campbell
malcolm@next.com.au
CD Editor: Harry Maragos
cdtech@pcpowerplay.next.com.au
Contributors: Brett Robinson, Ashton Mills, John Dewhurst, Eli Bradling, Lindsey Smith, Maj. Des McNicholas, Edward Fox, Ewan Corness, Pete Sharpe, Elton Cane, Ed Dawson
Technical Editors: Garry Wallis, Hugh Norton-Smith
US Correspondent: Don St. John
UK Correspondent: Steve K. Boxer
Photographer: Scott Wajon

Publisher: Jim Flynn
jim@next.com.au
Managing Director: Phillip Keir
keir@next.com.au
Circulation Manager: Karen Day
karen@next.com.au
Advertising Production Co-ordinator: Dylan Fryer
dylan@next.com.au
General Enquiries: (02) 9699 0333
Fax: (02) 9310 1315

ADVERTISING
Group Sales Manager: Jo Ley
jo@next.com.au
Advertising Manager: Anthony Hennessy
anthony@next.com.au
Advertising Sales Exce.: Kylie Evans
kylie@next.com.au
Production Co-ordinator: Dylan Fryer
dylan@next.com.au
Production Manager: Melissa Doyle
melissa@next.com.au
Financial Director: Theo Fatseas
theo@next.com.au
Assistant Accountant: Michael Molloy
michael@next.com.au
SUBSCRIPTION ENQUIRIES:
Phone: (02) 9699 0319
e-mail: subs@next.com.au
Fax: 02 9699 0344

All copyrights reserved by
Next Publishing Pty Ltd
ACN No 002 647 645
Printed by Wilke Colour
Distributed by Gordon & Gotch
Customer Service: Ph 1300 65 0666
Fax 1300 65 0777
ISSN: PCPP 1326-5644

Write to PC PowerPlay at:
418a Elizabeth St, Surry Hills,
NSW 2010, Australia
E-mail: pcpowerplay@next.com.au
Fax: 02 9310 1315
CD tech support:
cdtech@pcpowerplay.next.com.au
Oracle: oracle@pcpowerplay.next.com.au
Setup: setup@pcpowerplay.next.com.au
Letters: letters@pcpowerplay.next.com.au

What we're playing:
Ben: Age of Empires 2, TOCA 2, Heroes of Might & Magic 3, LeMans beta, Blink 182
March: Madden 2000, System Shock 2 co-op, Thief Gold, Mogwai, Super Furry Animals
David: The Nomad Soul, System Shock 2 co-op, Andrea Parker, Cibo Matto
Malcolm: Final Fantasy VIII, FIFA 2000, To Rocco Rot, Tha Alkaholiks

The 1999 PC PowerPlay Game of the Year Awards

The lights dim and the crowd hushes. The band plays the opening bars of the William Tell overture as some bloke in a suit walks to the podium.

"Thank you for coming tonight".

[*Polite applause*]

Welcome to the annual PC PowerPlay Game of the Year awards"

[*The crowd goes mad*]

"May I also take this opportunity to introduce my luscious assistant Trixi, say hi Trixi!"

"Hi Trixi! Teeheehehehehe"

"That's enough from you, my dear"

"Teeheehehehehe"

"Yes, indeed. My friends, the PC PowerPlay GOTY award has grown to be amongst the most important cultural events of the year. In fact, according to the latest Roy Morgan data, PCPP GOTY is now more important than the Silver Logie presentation, with a current Value To Society factor an impressive 6.1.

[*Crowd erupts with ecstatic joy*]

"People, people! Settle... There's plenty of time for that sort of behaviour later. Now, as you well know, GOTY's tentacles reach every corner of gaming. We've got an award category for every damn thing we could think of. Talk about breadth! No Trixi, not now. If it's going on in gaming, it's going on in GOTY, as we like to say. From now on"

[*As one, crowd leaps in the air, praising the glory that is PCPP*]

At this point in the proceedings I'd like to extend a special greeting of warm love to the game developers that were able to make it along tonight. Unfortunately Richard Garriott couldn't make it in person, but we know he's watching the telecast from his medieval castle on the moon, so a special hello to Lord B!"

[*Crowd bursts into spontaneous rapture as Trixi inadvertently triggers the fireworks display while lighting what many still believe really was a cigarette*]

"In this room here tonight are gathered the two great

superpowers of gaming: you, the gamers, and the developers, who strive to bring you the goodness you need. Each cannot exist without the other. It is a perfect union of givers of fun and takers of fun. And you, delightful readers, are the takers. We at PCPP see ourselves as moderators in this delicate process, a United Nations of gaming, if you will".

[*Crowd collectively groans as Trixi, buoyed on by delusions of popularity, unsuccessfully attempts her "trademark move" on the bandleader*]

"And because you take, it is time to give. Give to GOTY and gain in gaming"

[*Crowd roars in admiration of the speaker's lucid wit*]

For as each and every one of you knows, when you vote, developers pay attention. When you support the good games, the developers will give you more. More of the same, more good games".

[*The crowd, spellbound and glassy-eyed, takes up the chant:*

More good games!

More good games!

More good games!]

"Let the voting begin! Thank you and goodnight! Trixi....."

Ben Mansill
Editor





CD GUIDE DISC 1

HOT! FROM THIS ISSUE ON, WE'RE PUTTING TWO CDs ON THE COVER! DOUBLE THE FUN!

CD POWERPLAY #44

Starting CD PowerPlay

Welcome to the PCPowerPlay double CD. We have included all the popular programs to make the most of your PC. Using the CD is easy. Simply insert the CD into your CDROM drive and it should automatically bring up the Menu interface. (If not, don't panic, just click on the RUNME.BAT file to manually install the program). Once the menu is up, you can navigate the screens using your mouse. Click on the category of your choice (Games, Utilities, patches.) to begin. Have a look at the programs, and if you see something you like to try out, just click on it. Depending on your choice, the program will either install itself to the hard drive or run straight off the CD.

cdtech@powerplay.next.com.au

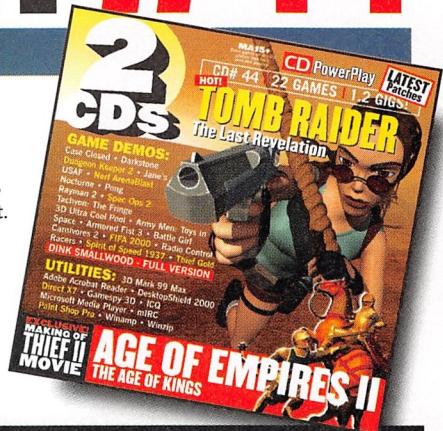
Faulty CDs will be replaced free of charge. Send it, together with a description of the error, to:

PC PowerPlay CD Returns

Reply Paid 634

78 Renwick St

Redfern NSW 2016 (No postage required)



DISC 1

UTILITIES

3D Mark 99 Max

3DMark 99 Max is a benchmark program that focuses on testing the 3D performance of 3D accelerators in a "real-world" environment. 3DMark 99 Max is the first benchmark that has been optimized to fully support both Intel Pentium III SIMD and AMD 3DNow instructions at the engine level. Since most people use their 3D accelerator for playing games, 3DMark focuses on game performance measurement using real-world game technology. Flat numbers only tell you so much, so 3DMark 99 Max is a two-part testing suite designed to push your system's 3D performance to the limits.

Adobe Acrobat Reader

Acrobat Reader lets you read and print from any system any document created as an Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) file, with its original appearance preserved. PDF files are compact and can be shared, viewed, navigated, and printed exactly as the author intended by anyone with Adobe Acrobat Reader. This version contains plug-ins for both Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer, which will automatically install into your browser.

DesktopShield 2000

This program will secure your PC when you are not using it. Anyone wishing to tamper with your computer or look at your data will be locked out. Just double-click on the program icon in the system tray to instantly lock your desktop. When you enable the program, the taskbar is removed from view, and task-switching key combinations (Ctrl-Alt-Del, Ctrl-Esc and Alt-Tab) are disabled. You can automatically load

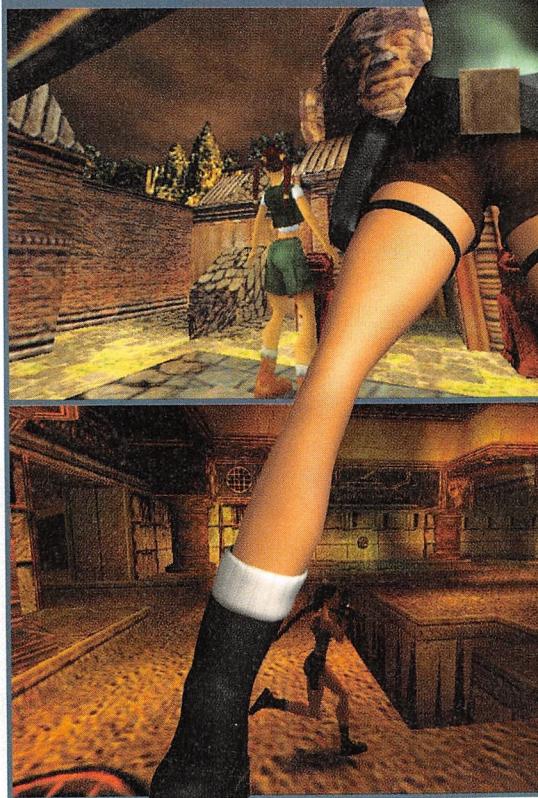
TOMB RAIDER THE LAST REVELATION

Category: 3D Platform

Developer: Eidos Interactive

Need: PII266, 32MB, 3D Card

■ Tomb Raider 4: The Last Revelation sends archaeologist Lara to the Land of the Pharaohs for an adventure that could cost her more than she bargains for. The plot revolves around ancient mythology and the alignment of the stars at the millennium. The title returns Lara to the cloak-and-dagger intrigue of Northern Africa developed in the original Tomb Raider game.



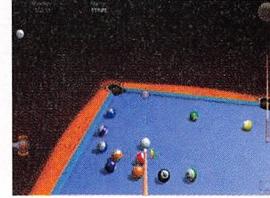
3D Ultra Cool Pool

Category: Sports

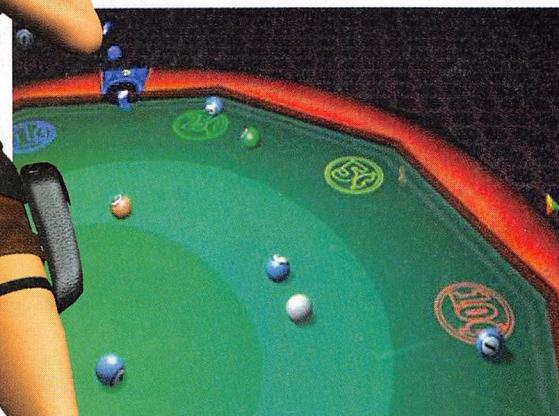
Developer: Sierra

Need: P166, 32MB, Win95/98

■ Take everything you know about Pool, and throw it in a blender. Cool Pool has all your favourites: Eight Ball, Cutthroat, Nine Ball, and more! But Cool Pool doesn't stop there. Add five wacky new pool games that



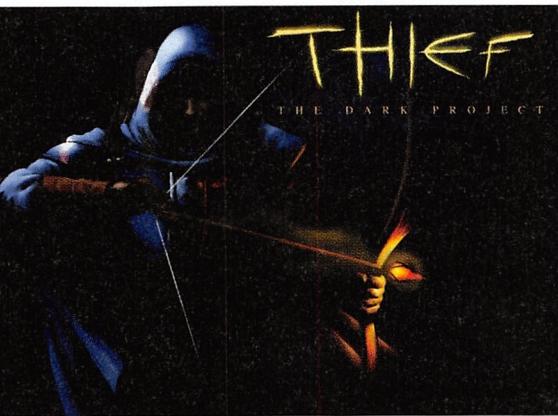
could only exist on a computer, like Rocket Ball, Chameleon Ball, or 24 Cents, and you've got more fun than you could shake a cue stick at!



THIEF GOLD

Category: Adventure
Developer: Eidos Interactive
Need: P200, 32MB, Win95/98

■ Success requires more than firepower - use stealth and intellect to outwit your enemies. Unique weapons help you achieve your goals: use your Blackjack to knockout unsuspecting opponents, a noise arrow to throw them off the trail, moss bombs to silence your footsteps in stone corridors, and if these don't keep you out of sight, it might be time to resort to more drastic measures. Like a fire arrow, or your trusty sword.



Army Men: Toys in Space

Developer: 3DO
Category: Strategy
Need: P90, 16MB, Win95/98, Direct X

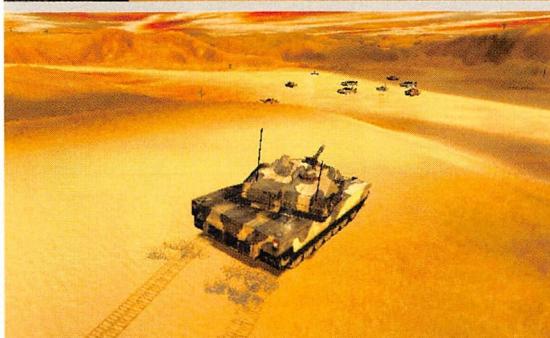
■ Sarge, the heroic Green defender of freedom, returns in this new episode of the Army Men conflict. This time Sarge must confront a bewildering variety of new enemies as Plastro enlists the aid of the deadly Bug-Eyed Aliens! Sarge must now combat both his old Tan nemesis and the new plastic alien menace. During the battle of the front yard, Sarge meets the leader of the heroic Space Troopers, who forms an alliance with the Green Army. With a powerful new class of toys at

his side, Sarge just might have a chance to rid the world of evil!

Battle Girl

Category: Shooter
Developer: Feral
Need: P166, 16MB, Win95/98, Direct X

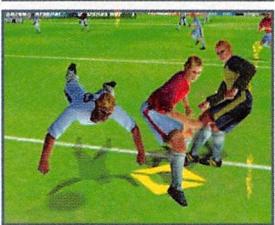
■ Welcome to the future, where the entire worldwide computer network is controlled by the Great Machine - a semi-intelligent supercomputer responsible for maintaining order in the Universe. A small but lethal terrorist organization has constructed a tough-as-nails robot called Terminus to crash the Great Machine. Survival of the civilised race depends on our heroine,



Armored Fist 3

Developer: Novalogic
Category: Tank Sim
Need: P2-266, 32MB, Win95/98, 3D Card

■ As the task force commander for Armored Fist, your orders are clear - advance, engage and destroy the enemy. You control the world's most advanced battle tank, the M1A2 Abrams. Considering this brutal armour plated beast bears over 1500 horsepower and a massively destructive 18 foot-long cannon, sometimes it almost seems too easy.



FIFA 2000

Category: Soccer Sim
Developer: EA Sports
Need: P100, 16MB, Win95/98

■ Now you can play the world's most popular sport with the world's best soccer simulation. From the joy of nailing a goal with a bicycle kick to the dread of being relegated to a lower division, FIFA 2000: Major League Soccer has it all. Take a closer look at the game that will bring soccer into the next millennium.



UTILITIES

► the program when Windows starts, hide your desktop altogether, and log access attempts to a disk.

Direct X7

DirectX is a set of system files that are required to run many of the newest Windows 95 and Windows 98 multimedia applications and games. This latest version of DirectX includes DirectMusic, which addresses the limitations of MIDI-based music playback on Windows by delivering superior timing services, support for the MIDI Manufacturers Association's Downloadable Sounds (DLS) standard for wavetable synthesis, and an integrated software synthesizer, which guarantees users consistent and high-quality playback on virtually any hardware configuration. DirectX also delivers support for the Direct3D API for Intel's Pentium III. This newest release offers performance improvements and provides enhanced three-dimensional graphics and sound effects.

Gamesspy 3D

GameSpy is a tool for Internet gaming that allows you to get server listings from anywhere on the Internet. Players of multiplayer Quake, QuakeWorld, Quake II, Shogo, Sin, Blood 2, Hexen II, Heretic II, Unreal, and Half-Life can use GameSpy to find lots of servers for multiplayer play. It provides detailed information for each server and can launch games and connect you to the server you want to join. GameSpy also can join the Internet game you specify and offers many other cool features. This release adds Starsiege: Tribes support.

ICQ

The latest release of ICQ ("I seek you"), the popular messaging program that lets you communicate with friends and colleagues in real time over the internet. This update offers improved security features. You can seek out friends on the ICQ network by entering their ICQ number, name, nickname, or email address. Once your contact list is set up, you'll be notified when your friends are online so that you can chat; send instant messages, files, and URLs; play games; or just hang out.

Microsoft Media Player

Microsoft Windows Media Player is based on the DirectShow architecture and designed to provide the most extensible, flexible, and convenient player for accessing multimedia content. You can play most file formats, including Windows Media, ASF, MPEG-1, MPEG-2, WAV, AVI, MIDI, VOD, AU, MP3, and QuickTime files - all from

UTILITIES

► one easy-to-use application. A Favorites menu lets you save your favorite clips for quick and easy replay. The menu even contains pointers to cool content sites. Windows Media Player can play anything from low-bandwidth audio to full-screen video, and you can resize the video window, even up to full screen, for optimal placement.

mIRC

This highly configurable IRC client features a clean and intuitive user interface, an events handler, and full send and receive capabilities for DCC (direct client connection) file. The program offers colored text lines, aliases, remote commands, and support for sound. It even includes an option to load your own backgrounds for virtually all windows available in mIRC.

Paint Shop Pro

Paint Shop Pro provides a rich and extensive set of tools for photo retouching, painting, image enhancement, and animation. Paint Shop Pro offers a large number of painting tools, image editing tools, special effects, selection tools, masking options, color enhancement tools, and image viewing options. You can capture screens or areas of the screen and browse thumbnail images. The program supports a large number of vector and bitmapped file formats. For converting image formats, you simply load an image and save it in a new format, or use the batch conversion tool.

Winamp

Winamp plays MPEG Layer 2 (MP2) and Layer 3 (MP3) audio streams, and combines extensive functionality with an intuitive interface. It has a full-featured playlist editor and a 10-band graphic equalizer with user-definable presets that can automatically load specific files. It now features Windows Media Technology 4.0 input/output support and the industry-standard Fraunhofer MP3 decoder.

Spirit of Speed 1937

Category: Driving Sim

Developer: Hasbro Interactive

Need: P2-233, 32MB, Win95/98, 3D Card

► Spirit of Speed 1937 is a grand prix simulation set in the years that saw the rise of those famous, and now legendary, racing cars and drivers. You'll drive the most exciting cars ever built and experience the thrill of total speed; a thrill that swept the world in the Thirties and made spectators flock in their hundreds of thousands to see new, purpose built circuits such as Brooklands. Spirit of Speed 1937 transports you to those unbelievable years. These were cars that made no concession to comfort; cars that were beautiful in shape and design; cars that startled the crowds; cars that created a vision of the future. Drive like you've never driven before.



Dink SmallWood

Category: Role Playing Game [RPG]

Developer: RT Soft

Need: 486DX2, 16MB, Win95/98

► Imagine exploring a giant medieval world filled with creatures and people that are more than just sprites. You don't just talk to people - you come to know them. You don't just kill things for experience - you tear them apart for fun. Dink Smallwood has been inspired by the classic oldies such as Zelda, Final Fantasy, King's Quest, Monkey Island and other favourites. The story begins in a world when dragons roamed the land and knights fought with valour and honour. And then there was Dink: the son of pig farmers. He wanted



nothing more than to join the King's army, impress the girls with his fancy armour, and experience adventures. He wondered: was throwing corn to swine all the adventure a young man could find? Little did young Dink Smallwood know that in time he would look upon these as "the good ol' days."



► Battle-girl, a 15 year-old red-headed pilot with a lust for action who must travel inside the mainframe from hell to destroy Terminus and stop the terrorists. Battle Girl's mission is to destroy all the viruses thrown out by Terminus to corrupt the Great Machine's program, and then to attack the evil Terminus before moving up to the next level of play.

Carnivores 2

Category: 1st Person Shooter

Developer: WizardWorks

Need: P200, 32MB, Win95/98, 3D Card

► Nothing could ever prepare you for this: the ultimate hunting experience. In Carnivores 2 you traverse

a vast new world filled with prehistoric creatures from a time long past. With enough weaponry to flatten a mountain range, you begin your search. You feel a surge of dominance over your potential next kill, but then come to an abrupt and haunting realisation - you are outnumbered, outsmarted, and the object of a deadly prehistoric creature's hunt. Running cannot help you this time - the hunter has become the hunted.

Radio Control Racers

Category: Driving Sim

Developer: Sierra

Need: P90, 32MB, Win95/98

► Little cars, HUGE fun! More than just cars with antennas, Radio Control Racers' unique "Driver Stand" view combined with true 3D physics delivers the most realistic RC racing experience on your computer. Earn money to upgrade your vehicle's motor, shocks, and tyres - or just grab one of the power-ups and get your car across the finish line first! Radio Control Racers offers multiplayer and single player circuit racing against the computer, numerous paint designs for each of the 4 vastly different R/C cars, and 8 beautifully rendered R/C tracks.





DISC 2



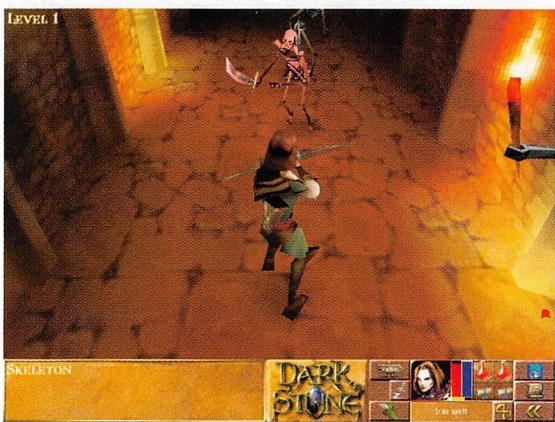
Case Closed

Category: Adventure
Developer: Spectrum Pacific
Need: P200, 32MB, Win95/98, Direct X

■ Case Closed is a cross between the classic board game Clue and a computer puzzle game. Search through twelve different rooms to discover which of the eight guests invited by your soon



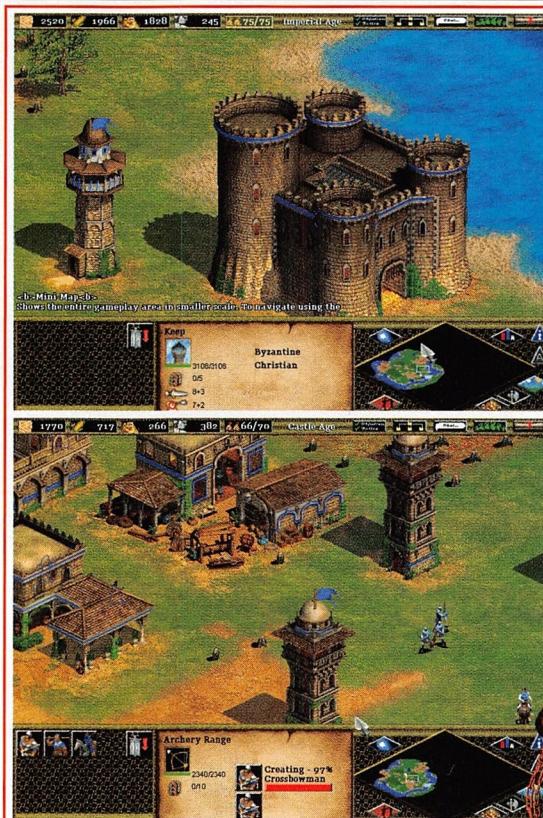
to be ex-host did him in. Each room has 360 degree 3D searching animation, and every game contains 9 different possible endings.



Darkstone

Category: Role Playing Game [RPG]
Developer: Gathering Of Developers
Need: PII-233, 32MB, Win95/98, 3D Card

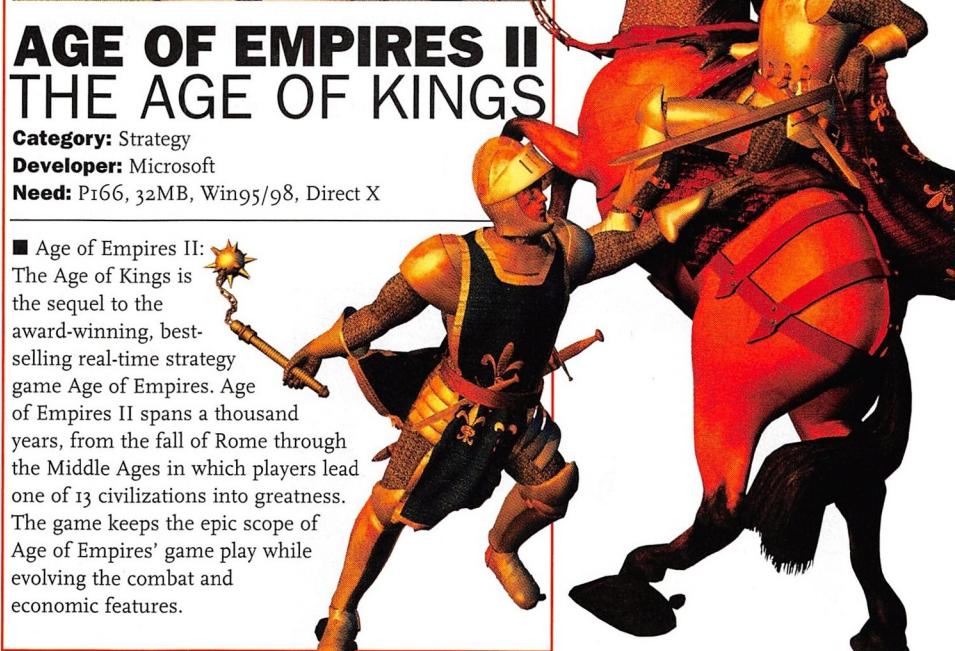
■ Enter the world of Darkstone and leave your identity at the door. Surviving this medieval world, living under the shadow of a nefarious dragon, will require nothing less than a complete transformation. As a knight, monk, thief, or sorcerer, you will creep through dungeons, explore towns and wilderness, and slay armies of nasty enemies on your quest to collect seven crystals that can defeat your fire-breathing nemesis. Look deep inside yourself. Is there a dragon slayer within?



AGE OF EMPIRES II THE AGE OF KINGS

Category: Strategy
Developer: Microsoft
Need: P166, 32MB, Win95/98, Direct X

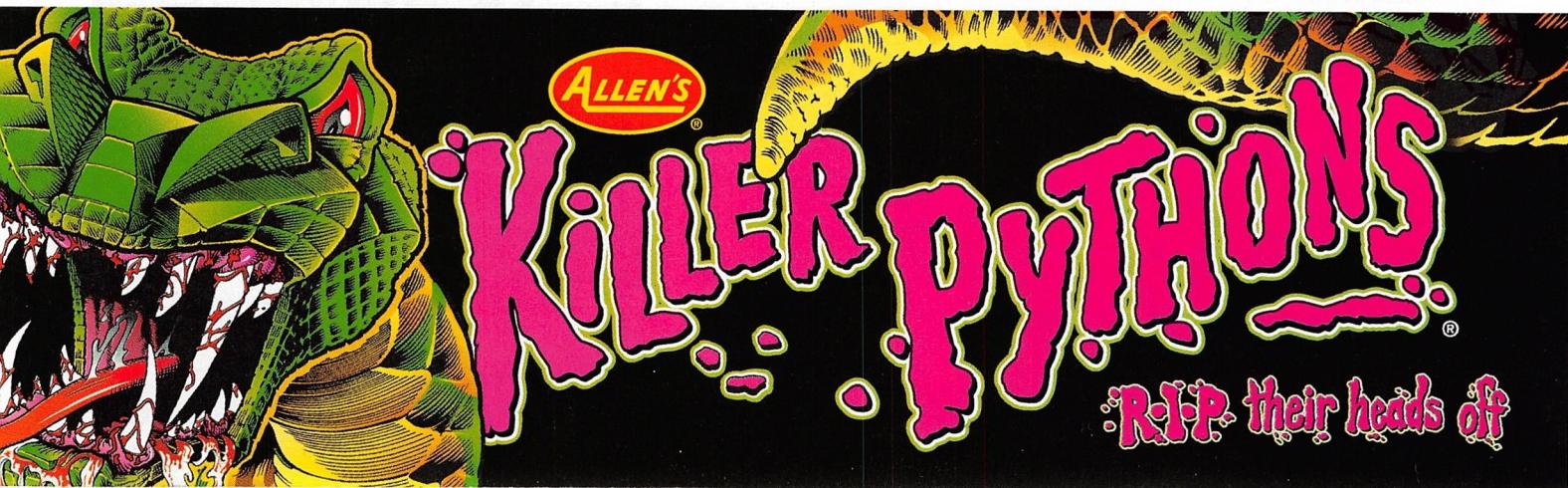
■ Age of Empires II: The Age of Kings is the sequel to the award-winning, best-selling real-time strategy game Age of Empires. Age of Empires II spans a thousand years, from the fall of Rome through the Middle Ages in which players lead one of 13 civilizations into greatness. The game keeps the epic scope of Age of Empires' game play while evolving the combat and economic features.



UTILITIES

WinZip

WinZip is a straightforward zipping and unzipping utility that includes built-in support for popular Internet file formats such as TAR, ZIP, UUencode, XXencode, BinHex, MIME, and Unix-compressed files. ARJ, LZH, and ARC files are supported via external programs. An optional wizard simplifies unzipping and installing software in ZIP files. New features in WinZip 7.0 include the ability to create self-extracting files that span multiple disks, the ability to print a list of files in a ZIP, sizable and sortable columns in the main window, easier configuration using a tabbed dialog box, an improved install feature, optional support for IE 4.0-style "one-click open," and a configurable toolbar with 21 new button graphics.





MOVIES

- Bingo The Clown
- Gabriel Knight 3
- Pharoah
- Freespace 2

EXCLUSIVE Movie-Making Of Thief 2: The Metal Age

An exclusive look at the making of the Thief 2: The Metal Age game. This interesting movie features behind the scenes footage of Looking Glass Studios and their work on a follow-up to their last groundbreaking effort - Thief: The Dark Project. Includes interviews with much of the development team.



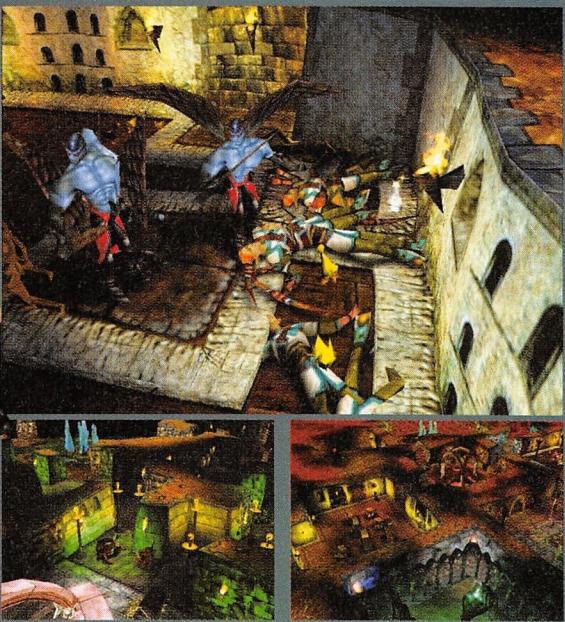
DUNGEON KEEPER 2

Category: Strategy

Developer: Electronic Arts

Need: P166, 32MB, Win95/98, Direct X

■ Dungeon Keeper 2 is a genre-defying blend of real-time strategy, god sim, first-person action and fantasy role-playing. DK2 turns the traditional tables by placing you in the role of sinister archfiend and master of a cavernous underworld. Build a dungeon to your own design, lay traps and doors to protect yourself, recruit an army of foul creatures and lure the heroic adventurers to their doom in your quest to reach the surface world of humankind.



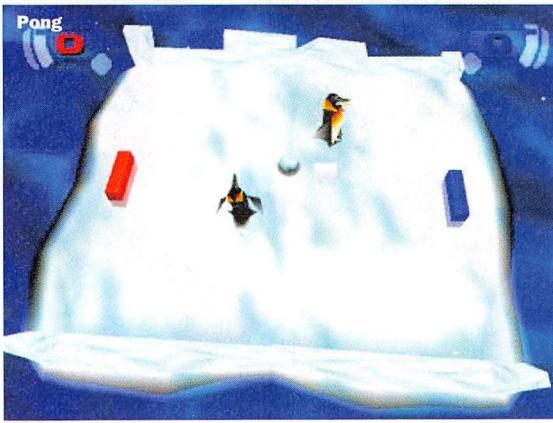
Jane's USAF

Category: Flight Simulator

Developer: Jane's Combat Simulations

Need: P200, 32MB, Win95/98, Direct X

Climb the pyramid to be the top pilot of the most advanced air force in the world: the USAF. Fly and train over US soil in the F-16C Falcon and A-10 Warthog or an arsenal of six other planes. Then relive great historic air battles flying the rugged F-4E over Vietnam or the powerful F-15C in Operation Desert



jane's USAF



Storm. Finally, push the envelope flying the menacing F-117 Stealth Fighter and ultra-modern F-22 Raptor as you project the power of the United States in futuristic campaigns over Europe. If that's not enough, take your skills to the net flying against other aces on JanesCombat.Net.

Pong

Category: Arcade

Developer: Hasbro Interactive

Need: P166, 32MB, Win95/98, Direct X

The addictive game that started it all is now an incredible 3-D experience. The premise is the same - keep your opponent from scoring. But now you have the option of single or multiplayer games and over 20 unbelievably fun, action-packed levels of competition. Best of all, Pong now has loads of offensive and defensive power-ups, game secrets, and fully functioning paddles that can catch, throw and spin the ball. Get ready to take your skills to a whole new level with Pong!

Rayman 2

Category: 3D Platform

Developer: UbiSoft

Need: P133, 32MB, Win95/98, 3D Card

A gang of unscrupulous pirates land in Rayman's world. Their mission is to capture and take over the



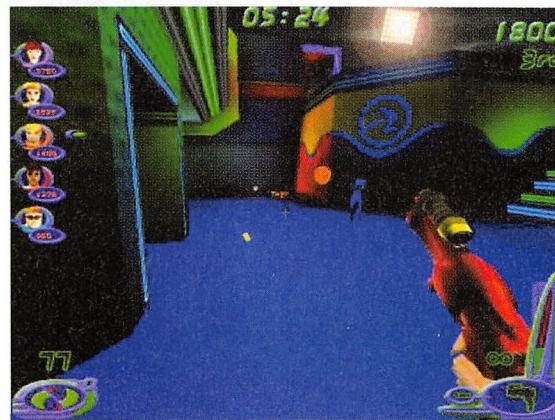
Spec Ops 2

Category: 3D Shooter

Developer: Ripcord Games

Need: P200, 32MB, Win95/98, Direct X

Spec Ops 2 is the sequel to the genre-busting Spec Ops and the multiplayer



Nerf ArenaBlast

Category: 3D Platform

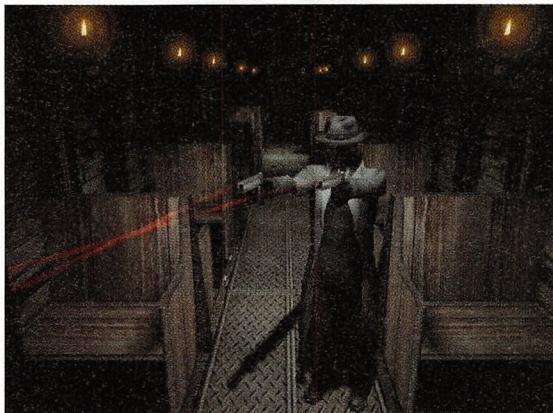
Developer: Hasbro Interactive

Need: P200, 32MB, Win95/98, Direct X

■ Nerf ArenaBlast is an entirely new 3D universe with bright, colourful levels and three cool ways to play: PointBlast, BallBlast and SpeedBlast. In PointBlast, you use big, bad Nerf blasters to power your way past your opponents. Blast them and score big points. BallBlast is a virtual scavenger hunt. You must find several brightly coloured Nerf balls and blast them into targets. SpeedBlast is a good old fashioned race, but with Nerf blasters that you can use to slow down your opponents. But watch out, because your opponents are armed and out to get you, too!

Patches

Aliens Vs Predator
Darkstone
Descent 3
Drakan
Driver
Freespace 2
Half-Life
MechWarrior 3
Rogue Spear
Shadowman
SiN
TOCA 2
Tribes
Unreal
XWing Alliance

**Tachyon: The Fringe**

Category: Space Simulator
Developer: Novologic
Need: P200, 32MB, Win95/98, Direct X

You are one of the best mercenary space-pilots in the Sol system. Play the beginning five, single-player missions of this intense space-combat adventure. Featuring: a free-form mission structure, furious space-fighter warfare, full in-game cinematics, innovative new weapons and the most incredible large-scale objects ever seen in a space game.

**Nocturne**

Category: Action/Adventure
Developer: Gathering Of Developers
Need: P200, 32MB, Win95/98, 3D Card

■ Nocturne is a horror-themed third-person 3D action adventure that places players in the shoes of a 1930s investigator of the supernatural. The player takes on the role of the "Stranger," a mysterious monster hunter who works for a government organization known as the Spookhouse. Founded by Teddy Roosevelt in 1889, the Spookhouse was created to protect national security from supernatural forces.

**Extra!****Unreal Maps and Editor**

The maps featured in the OzUnreal level competition (see page 20) have been provided for your total and utter enjoyment on this month's CD PowerPlay.

Note: The Unreal maps are actually in the directory incorrectly labelled "Unreal Tournament Maps". Sorry 'bout that!

Sensational Aura Interactor gets you...

SHAKIN' ALL Over



Strap on the **Aura Backpack** and experience a new dimension in gaming action. **Really** feel the kicks, thumps & crashes and catch all the action of your favorite games. At home on a **PC**, **Playstation** or **N64** the Aura Will let you play the game like never before.

Also available as a back support pad, the cushion turns your seat into a **vibration capsule**. Games spring to life and the bass really pumps. Even your home theatre and stereo experience will be lifted by the Aura Interactor. **Great for Christmas and includes everything you need!**

Get yours today!



ONLY 59.95

Jaycar stores located in - Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Canberra, Newcastle, New Zealand and Dealers in most country areas.

Call Freecall 1800 022 888

Sydney call (02) 9743 5222

Mail order - freecall for phone orders 1800 022 888

Jaycar
ELECTRONICS

GAMENews

HEADLINES: Duke's Back! • Codemasters International Comeback • Woody's Back!
The Blair Witch and Evil Dead • Reports from the UK and US.

SIDELINES

X-MEN COMETH

Keen readers of Marvel comics such as X-Men and Blade will be pleased to hear that Activision has entered into an agreement to bring their superhero adventures to the computer screen. The first fruit of the relationship could be on its way next year with a game to tie-in with the forthcoming X-Men film starring everyone's favourite bald captain, Patrick Stewart. Also a strong possibility for licensing is the sequel to Wesley Snipes' Blade film, similarly scheduled for release in 2000.

MECHIN' ADDONS

You've probably finished Mechwarrior 3 by now and, as it's a rather fine slice of mech action, would be eager for a bit more. Well, how does a trip to Pirate's Moon sound? That's the name of the new add-on that features eighteen missions, six new mechs and five extra weapons. The bonus campaign has you battling with the New Belt pirates on the world of Veil. Improvements to the AI and general gameplay tweaking are promised, too. Pirate's Moon should hit around Christmas time.

REAL-TIME ALIENS

Veteran readers may recall the Alien Breed series from way back in the early 90s. It was a sci-fi version of Gauntlet, though it transformed into a Doom clone on the Amiga in later versions. Original developers Team 17 - now more famous for Worms - are resurrecting the venerable series in the shape of Alien Breed Conflict, a squad-based real-time strategy game. Sporting 3D technology and multiplayer capabilities, Conflict should be with us later next year.

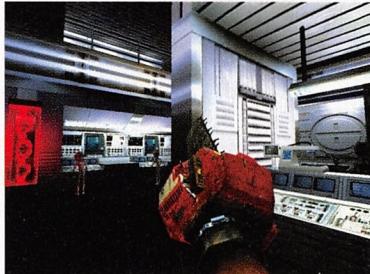
SELL SELL SELL

Can't get enough of Lara? After Eidos' hype machine has trampled all over us in the lead up to Christmas, then perhaps you will have had enough. Some of the planned Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation merchandise includes playing cards (perfect for a game of strip poker, may we suggest?), t-shirts, action figures, candy bars, and a comic book. There's no escape from Lara, resistance is futile...

Is that Robert Jordan? No, it can't be - there's no pipe.



DAMN, HE'S LOOKIN' GOOD!



It seems the next Duke Nukem game might not be taking forever after all. During one of the most protracted development cycles in gaming history, 3D Realms struggled through all kinds of difficulties - from key team members leaving to wholesale changes to the game's

engine. But now the long wait appears to be over.

These are the first images released by 3D Realms since the switch to the Unreal engine, and the results are stunning as you can no doubt see for yourself. According to the Duke Nukem Forever project head, George Broussard, the game is

entering the final phase of development: "Once we move the code to Unreal tournament's code base (November/ early Dec), we'll be ready to rock and finish the game up."

We can't wait to get up close and personal with that bearded farmer guy and his donkey. Yee-haw!

CODIES TO THE RESCUE

In further developments to last month's shakedown at Sierra, it has transpired that Codemasters have salvaged two tiles from the wreckage of the former Sierra division of Yosemite Entertainment. The groundbreaking online RPG The Realm and Navy SEALS have both been picked up and will continue to be supported and

developed, respectively. Predominately a UK publishing house, Codemasters see the acquisition as a good way to break into the American market. It has been suggested that the Codies are also interested in resurrecting Babylon 5 and may even take on board some of Sierra's old adventure game

Codemasters

developers. After all, Yosemite was where it all started for Sierra with old hands like Ken and Roberta Williams. No doubt the fallout from this story will continue for some time.

OH, THE HORROR!

This summer's biggest movie, the already infamous Blair Witch Project, is coming to your PC. At the launch of Nocturne on Halloween eve, Gathering of Developers' Mike Wilson announced that G.O.D. had secured the game rights to the low-budget but hugely successful horror flick. The Blair Witch Project is essentially about how a small group of actors spent a night in the scariest forest you can imagine while being terrorised and tormented by the film's creators who recorded it all on handheld cameras. Legend has it that much of the script was improvised.

Contrary to early reports that the Blair Witch game would be an add-

on or mission disc for Nocturne, we can confirm that it will definitely be a stand-alone release. The confusion may have arisen because Terminal Reality, the developers of Nocturne, are also working on the game and it will make use of Nocturne's powerful game engine.

In related news, THQ have announced they have begun work on a game based upon classic Sam Raimi cult-horror film, Evil Dead. The new development team, Heavy Iron Studios, is comprised of numerous game and film veterans, and is intent on creating a real-time 3D adventure game set sometime after the events of the movie.



BRAND NEW YOU'RE RETRO

If the names Smash TV, Super Sprint or Toobin' mean anything to you then you'll be as thrilled as we are by the revelation that Midway are releasing conversions of six of their greatest arcade games all on one CD. One of the most fantastically frantic shoot 'em ups ever written, Smash TV will be joined on the Arcade Party Pak by the top-down multiplayer racing of Super Sprint and the white-water action of Toobin', as well as minor classics like Rampage, Klax and Rampart. Retro gamers should start salivating now.



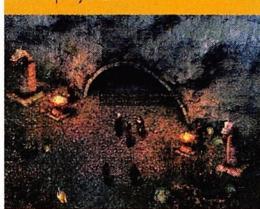
SIDELINES

COMPOS GALORE

Three compendiums are coming courtesy of 3DO. The first pools together all the Army Men titles in one convenient bundle - Army Men I & II plus a generous six never-before-seen multiplayer maps. The second is a Might & Magic compilation featuring the editions IV through VII of New World's defiantly hardcore fantasy role-playing series. More impressively, the third is entitled Heroes of Might & Magic Millennium Edition and contains the three HOMM games plus the expansion packs for I & II. Meanwhile, in very interesting HOMM news, rumours abound that the fourth iteration is already in development and is said to mark a significant break from the previous titles. Give HOMMIV a 3D engine and what would distinguish it from Warcraft III? Hmm...

HELLO ELRIC

Renowned fantasy author Michael Moorcock is the latest to provide inspiration for a game developer. His novel, Elric of Melnibone, part of Eternal Champions series, is to be translated to PC (and some consoles whose names we've forgotten) for release in 2001. Carrying the name Stormbringer, developer Snowball Interactive are hoping to provide a role-playing adventure that elicits a strong emotional response from players.



VISIT KOSOVO

As the last grenade crashes to earth in the most recent Balkans conflict, Talonsoft are on hand to let us experience it all again. Except this time it's virtual. The next instalment in their Operational Art of War series is set in Kosovo and situates the player in control of the NATO forces. Entitled Flashpoint Kosovo, this new campaign and mission editor will feature as part of an expansion pack for TOAWII.

STRATEGIC SALES

It's truly been the year of the strategy game. Not only is Age of Empires II: Age of Kings riding high in the charts worldwide, but Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun has shipped, as of November, over two million units across the globe. Blimey! At that rate, Tib Sun could well become the best-selling PC game of all time.

STILL HIDING

Hidden & Dangerous is one of the year's best games, combining as it does exciting first-person action and squad-based strategy in a heavily atmospheric WWII setting, so the idea of an expansion pack pleases us

immensely. While addressing the admittedly high number of bugs in the first release, this add-on will also offer three new campaigns encompassing theatres of war in Poland, Greece and the Ardennes. Entitled The Devil's Bridge, the usual requirement of new weapons and characters are guaranteed an appearance as well. You can expect it on shelves early in the new year.

GET A NEW WOODY

With the movie mere days away from release, it's inevitable that a Toy Story 2 game won't be far away either. In fact, it should be out before Christmas, too. Obviously aimed mainly at the younger gamer, it's a third-

person action/adventure that closely follows the plot of the film. You (or your little brother or sister, but probably you) take control of Buzz Lightyear as he journeys through a number of levels to rescue his fellow toy, Woody. If Pixar, the creators of the film, have anything to do with the game then it at least promises to be a glorious treat for the eyes.



SIDELINES**WHERE'S JEFF GOLDBLUM?**

Terminal Reality's Fly! received a warm commendation from us (85% PCPP#42), so it's hardly surprising that both an add-on and a proper sequel are on their way. Interestingly, local lads PC Aviator have been commissioned to supply a Pacific Northwest scenery expansion pack, but unfortunately that means depicting the likes of Washington, Oregon and British Columbia rather than any part of Australia. Also to be included in the pack are three new aircraft, the Boeing 757, 767 and 777. The Fly! sequel, cunningly named Fly! II will add new planes, scenery, more detailed cockpits, and offer a more accessible game for flight novices.

NO GRAPHICS

VR-1 Crossroads is the name of a strikingly unusual game in development by the eponymous VR-1. It's a role-playing game that has no graphics, instead relying upon a combination of text and sound to illustrate its game world. Crossroads is apparently the first online game to make use of the DirectMusic technology inherent in DirectX, enabling a dynamic soundtrack to immerse the player in a virtual city. Sounds bizarre, but it's true.

BLATANT PLUG

Quick note: Next Online, our sister online people, is in the process of setting up a cool and massive site totally dedicated to the art of playing games. Some of the features will include game news, reviews, downloads, and forums. Of course, PC PowerPlay will be there as well. More on this as the launch gets closer...

BATHURST TOCA 3

STOP PRESS! Codemasters next TOCA game will feature a Bathurst track! We'll tell you more about this next issue.

UK NEWS

by Steve Boxer

The usual pre-Christmas hysteria is just beginning to grip the UK games industry. Many of this year's most heavyweight PC offerings have already hit the shops - the mighty Age of Empires II has delighted Microsoft by topping the charts, Omikron arrived last week and GTA 2 is also on sale, although hasn't performed as many thought it might.

As usual, there has been a touch of consolidation going on - Rage Software has bought military sim experts DiD from Infogrames (now there's one to treasure: Infogrames selling a company rather than buying one). The Virgin Interactive/Interplay saga took yet another twist when a controlling stake in the hybrid company was acquired by French dark horse Titus. Mattel, meanwhile, announced that its interactive wing

The Learning Company (which, you may recall, swallowed up Mindscape and Broderbund) will henceforth become known as Mattel Interactive. Ambitious Scottish developer Vis Interactive has signalled its intention to take of the world by announcing that industry legend and Bullfrog co-founder Les Edgar has joined the company. SCi is up to its old tricks - that is, causing shock, horror and outrage. It is, apparently, creating a game based on the notorious Great Train Robbery, in which you'll be able to play as either Slipper of the Yard or one of the robbers.

A few games recently poked their heads over the parapet for the first time. The most significant being Demis Hassabis' Elixir Studios sneak preview of Republic: The Revolution. Ex-Bullfrog man Hassabis is a painfully bright boy -



Omkron: it's that old rock star again.

he even recently won the Mind Sports Olympiad - and Republic: The Revolution promises to be pretty special. Apart from an outrageous graphics engine which has allowed Elixir to create entire cities in 3D with ridiculous amounts of detail, its scope comfortably blows away all previous sim games. Basically, it is set in an Eastern European Republic called Novistrana, and from modest beginnings, you must cheat, bribe and bully your way up to President. Eidos will publish the game, and it may even be ready for next Christmas (although we doubt it). Remember, folks: treat 'em mean and keep it clean.

US NEWS

by Don St John

OK, I'm back...where the hell *have* I been, anyway? Well, the US was under attack for several months by alien forces from the Epsilon Quadrant, and I was tied up for a while dealing with that. No doubt you read about it in the newspapers there, right?

Anyway, with the little buggers vanquished, I'm still in something of a fighting mood. Of course, all sorts of stuff is hitting the stores now to slake our thirst for destruction, but it's the games just entering the pipeline for next year that have me stoked. Are you one of the pre-Doom zillions who's always wanted an update of Wolfenstein 3-D? Well, it's finally time; word is that Xatrix is prepping Castle Wolfenstein 2000. Now, will this be the cool Xatrix of Cyberia and the Reckoning mission pack for Q2, or the bogus Xatrix of Redneck Deer Huntin'? My hunch

says the former. This will be riding on the Quake III: Arena engine, by the way.

Then there's Duke Nukem Forever, which is about as overdue as I've been. The engine change from the Quake 2 to Unreal threw this way offline; the honchos at 3D Realms said it meant about 6 to 8 weeks of delay, but you know better, right? Anyway, 3D Realms just posted the first looks anyone's had since the 1998 E3 on their web site; should be fun if these glimpses are any indication. Who'll end up being the publisher of record on that one, by the way, is open to guesswork. GT Interactive's expected sale is apparently imminent as of this writing; the most recent guesses have Infogrames picking it up. What that does to partnership agreements with developers? Stay tuned.



Alice: it looks a bit like Quake 3

But the one you have to check out is Alice, a 3D shooter - yet another using the Quake III engine - being developed by American McGee and published by Electronic Arts. Why so intrigued with the umpteenth Q3 shooter? Well, this one is set in the world of Alice In Wonderland - that's right, the Lewis Carroll book. Seems Alice goes back to Wonderland and finds that the Queen of Hearts has screwed things up good. So our mushroom-eating heroine gets some strange and very lethal toys in hand and takes out after her. Irresistible, no? Figure on late 2000 for this and hope that it doesn't end up being so very very late.

EXTRA-TIME

With the local and European soccer seasons in full swing, Eidos have made the timely announcement that a new edition to their phenomenally successful Championship Manager series is imminent. Due in December, the aptly-titled CM3: Season 1999/2000 will update all the recent transfers, tweak player stats

and iron out a few gameplay anomalies. More extensive match commentary and the capacity to make stadium improvements are two of the additional features. Of course, the true test of the game's accuracy will be whether West Ham United win the Premier League every season. (In your dreams, Dave - Ed).

EVOLVE OR DIE

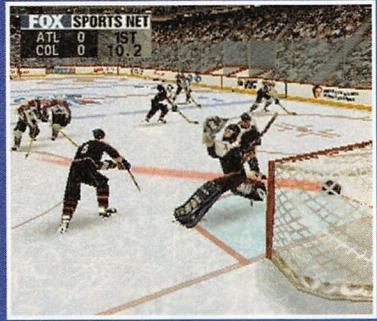
CyberLife, the British-based artificial intelligence researchers who also make computer games (and, hey, why not?), are set to release the third in their Creatures series. Leaving behind the earthbound environs of previous titles, Creatures 3 is situated aboard a huge spaceship where the Norns and Grendels

encounter an alien race called the Shee.

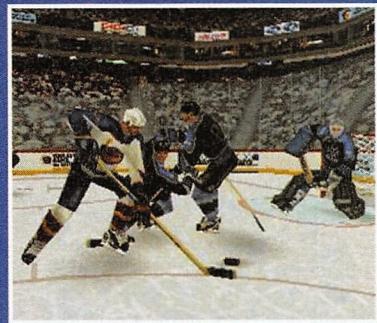
Improvements to the AI include giving the creatures the ability to smell and to differentiate between positive and negative actions and reactions. Virtual pets have just taken one step up the evolutionary ladder.



INTRODUCING THE NEWEST WAY TO PLAY HOCKEY



Authentic FOX Sports Net™
graphics-including FOX TRAX™



Camera angles that put
you in the action



Addictive gameplay that's
fast and fun

SPORTS GAMES. FOX ATTITUDE.™

foxsports.com

log on for more info,
screenshots and downloads

Distributed by

ACTIVISION



Also on
Windows®
95/98 CD-ROM

PC
CD-ROM

Windows® 95/98

G

FOX
SPORTS
INTERACTIVE

©1999 Twentieth Century FOX Film Corporation. All Rights Reserved. FOX, "FOX Sports," FOX Sports Net, "FOX Trax," FOX Sports Interactive, "FOX Interactive," Twentieth Century FOX and their associated logos are trademarks and the property of Twentieth Century FOX Film Corporation. Officially Licensed Product of the NHLPA. National Hockey League Players' Association, NHLPA and the NHLPA Logo are trademarks of the NHLPA and are used under license by FOX Interactive. NHL and the NHL shield are registered trademarks of the National Hockey League. All NHL logos and marks and team logos and marks depicted herein are the property of the NHL and the respective teams and may not be reproduced without the prior written consent of NHL Enterprises, L.P. ©1999 NHL. All Rights Reserved. This product is an Officially Licensed Product of the National Hockey League. Windows and the Windows logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Manufactured and printed in the U.S.A. Licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment America for use with the PlayStation game console. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. THIS SOFTWARE IS COMPATIBLE WITH PLAYSTATION GAME CONSOLES WITH THE NTSC U/C DESIGNATION. U.S. AND FOREIGN PATENTS PENDING.

PETT 992865

ALL MAPS ON THE CD!*

OZ UNREAL LEVEL DESIGN COMPETITION RESULTS

Hot on the heels of the almost universally popular Unreal Tournament come the results of the OzUnreal level editing competition. As these maps showed us, the original Unreal has a lot of life left in it! Organised with the attitude that we here in Oz can do anything as well as the rest of the world, the contest was organised for Australian residents, with an Australian theme category as well as single player and DM level prizes. The response was really encouraging and was a great taste of some of the talent out there, with some 28 levels submitted. Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all entrants and sponsors. Without further ado here are the results:

MULTIPLAYER

1ST DM Aggressive Tendencies

By Chris Blundell

Aggressive Tendencies really shone and won because of smooth gameplay, great architecture and lighting, and item placement and bot path nodding were spot on. This map is destined to be huge online and we look forward to playing more levels from Chris.

Wins: Voodoo3 3000 Video Card, SoundBlaster Live Value Card, PC Works Speakers, Unreal Tournament, Unreal Mission Pack, TPG Internet Pack

2ND DM Red Moon

By Rick Burlow

Wins: Voodoo3 3000 Video Card, Unreal Tournament, 100MB 100MHz DIMM, 6 Month Subscription to PC PowerPlay

3RD DM Tycho

By Jason Poots

He wins nothing

because he came Second in the single player group so the prizes go to...

4TH DM Devils Lair2

By Doug Smith

Wins: 6 Month Subscription to PC PowerPlay, TPG Internet Pack, Unreal Mission Pack, Accton 10/100 PCI Network Card

SINGLE PLAYER

1ST Tower of Sharakish'a

By Geoffrey Field

Wins: Voodoo3 3000 Video Card, SoundBlaster Live Value Card, PC Works Speakers, Unreal Tournament, TPG Internet Pack

2ND The Elder

By Jason Poots

Wins: Voodoo3 3000 Video Card, Unreal Tournament, 64MB 100MHz DIMM, 6 Month Subscription to PC PowerPlay

3RD In Human Infiltration

by Nathan Danchisen

Wins: 6 Month Subscription to PC PowerPlay, TPG Internet Pack, Unreal Mission Pack, Accton 10/100 PCI Network Card

AUSTRALIAN THEME

(only 2 entries)

1ST HomeStead

by Rob Shaw

Wins: 6 Month Subscription to PC PowerPlay, Unreal Tournament, Unreal Mission Pack

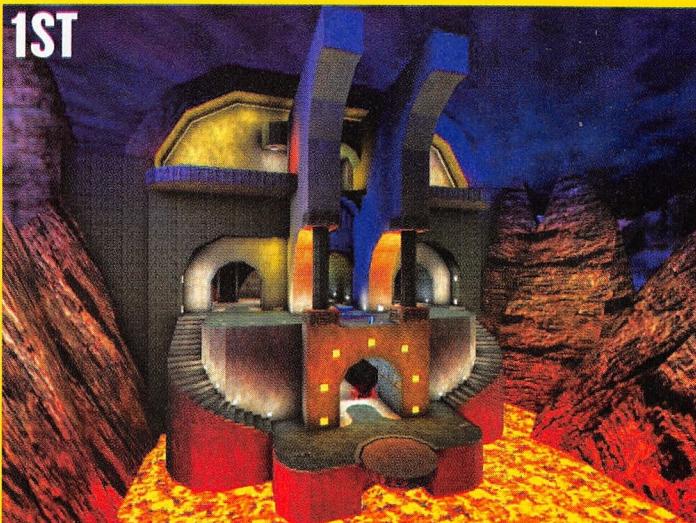
2ND Ayres Rock PowerPlant

by Chris McIlwain

Wins: 6 Month Subscription to PC PowerPlay, Unreal Mission Pack

MULTIPLAYER

1ST



2ND



3RD



4TH



SINGLE PLAYER

1ST



2ND

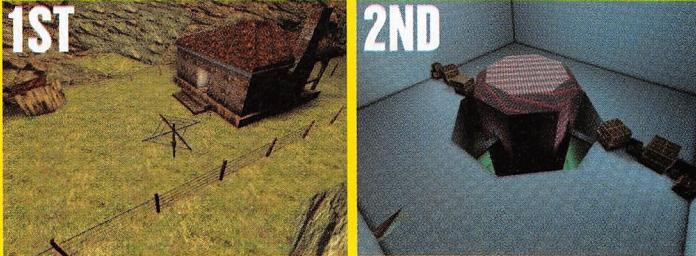


3RD

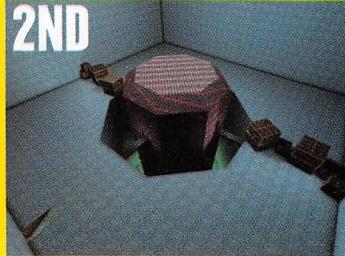


AUSTRALIAN THEME

1ST



2ND



THE WAIT IS OVER.

Time to
kick ass
down under.

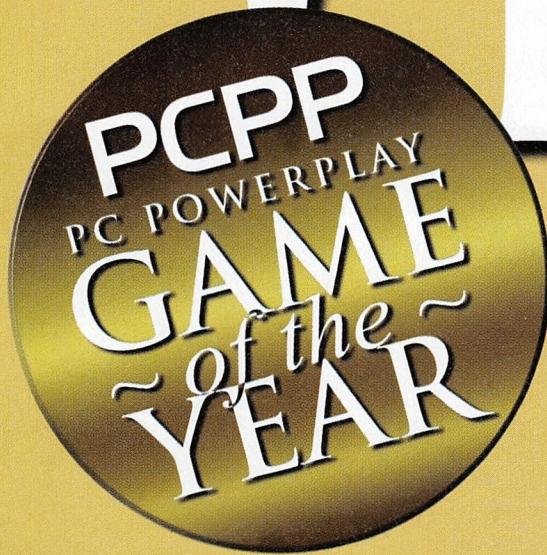
Are
you
with
us?

ULTIMA ONLINE DISCOVERY EDITION
COMING DECEMBER 1999



We create world™

GAME of the YEAR 1999



Opinions, eh?

You buy PC PowerPlay to read ours every month of the year. But the thing about opinions is that everyone has got one. Especially when it comes to games. And, of course, the most important opinions come from the people who actually buy those games - YOU. So, here's your chance to tell us what you thought were the best games of 1999.

Yes, the celebrated PCPP GOTY Awards is back and bigger than ever - well, it's one page bigger at least. Helpfully provided to you over on the page opposite (and over the page) is a voting form detailing all the voting categories and their respective nominees. Fill it out, tear it out, then pop it in an envelope and post it to us. Australia Post has been placed on full alert to cope with the inevitable deluge of mail entries. Don't delay!

How to Vote:

The Game of the Year awards cover the period from November 1998 to December 1999. Yes, we know that's actually fourteen months, but it was thought to be best for all concerned if the awards were brought into line with the calendar year. A sensible decision, we're sure you'll agree. All this means is that any game released before the end of this year is now eligible to be voted for. Indeed, the voting form will be updated next month to include all the big Christmas releases.

Closing date for all entries is February 9th and the winners will be announced in the April issue.

Send your voting form to:
PC PowerPlay
GOTY
Level 6,
418a Elizabeth St
Surry Hills, NSW 2010

WIN!

As if further incentive were needed, one lucky GOTY voter will have his or her efforts well rewarded with a couple of select gaming peripherals kindly donated by Logitech. There's the Logitech WingMan Formula steering wheel (valued at \$199), which we reviewed last issue, giving it a hearty thumbs up in the process - it's Ferrari yellow, has proper gear levers, and thus is the best steering wheel around. There's also the Logitech WingMan Extreme Digital 3D joystick, which is reviewed in this very issue!

The prize winner will be drawn at random from all the votes we've received by the closing date.

ONLINE VOTING

Of course, we fully understand that you might prefer not to rip a page from your favourite games mag. For your convenience, then, we've arranged a handy online voting form at our sister website, Hyper@ctive. Simply direct your browser to www.hyperactive.com and follow the appropriate link. The environmentally-friendly way to vote!



GAME • of the • YEAR

VOTING FORM LIFTOUT

HOW TO VOTE:

From the nominees listed, please write your pick for the winner in the space provided below each category. You don't need to vote in every category to be eligible for the prize.

Send entries to:

G.O.T.Y, PC PowerPlay, Level 6, 418a Elizabeth St
Surry Hills, NSW 2010

BEST GAME OF 1999

BEST INTRO

BEST MUSIC

BEST SOUND FX

BEST GRAPHICS

BEST STORYLINE

BEST INTERFACE

BEST ENEMY

MOST ORIGINAL GAME

MOST IMPRESSIVE AI

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER (SINGLE PLAYER)

Nominees:
Aliens vs Predator
Blood 2
Deer Hunter 2
Half-Life
Kingpin
Klingon Honor Guard
Redline
Redneck Deer Hunting
Requiem
SHOGO
Sin
Turok 2

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER (MULTI-PLAYER)

Nominees:

Aliens vs Predator
Half-Life
Kingpin
Requiem
SHOGO
Sin

TURN-BASED STRATEGY

Nominees:

101st Airborne in Normandy
Alpha Centauri
Battle of Britain
Braveheart
Civilization: Call to Power
Civilization: Test of Time
Disciples
Eastern Front II
Heroes of Might & Magic III
Imperialism 2
MAX 2
North vs South
Ruthless.com
Starfleet Command
Star Trek: Birth of the Federation
Worms Armageddon

ONLINE ONLY

Nominees:

Cyberstrike 2
Everquest
Starsiege Tribes
Team Fortress
Ultima Online: The Second Age
Warbirds 2



Starcraft: last year's overall winner and best RTS

REAL-TIME STRATEGY

Nominees:

Abomination
Age of Empires II
Army Men 2
Caesar III
Close Combat 3
C&C: Tiberian Sun
Constructor: Street Wars
Creatures 2
Cutthroats
Dominion: Storm Over Rift 3
Dungeon Keeper 2
Echelon
Enemy Infestation
Fighting Steel
Fleet Command
Force 21
Gangsters
Homeworld
Knights & Merchants
Machines
Man of War II
Myth 2
Populous: The Beginning
Railroad Tycoon 2
Riverworld
Rollercoaster Tycoon
Saga: Rage of the Vikings
Settlers 3
Seven Kingdoms II
Shadow Company
Simcity 3000
Total Annihilation: Kingdoms
Wargasm
War of the Worlds
Warzone 2100

DRIVING/RACING

Nominees:

Boss Rally
Breakneck
Buggy
Burnout Drag Racing
Carmageddon 2
Colin McRae Rally
DeathKarz
Driver
Eidos Official F1
GP 500
Grand Prix Legends
Grand Theft Auto 2
Grand Touring
Johnny Herbert's Grand Prix
Midtown Madness
Monaco Grand Prix
Motocross Madness
Moto Racer 2
NASCAR 3
NASCAR Road Racing
NASCAR Truck Racing
Need For Speed: High Stakes
Newman Haas Racing
NHRA Drag Racing
Powerslide
Rally Championship 2000
Re-Volt
Rollcage
SCARS
Sega Rally 2
Speedbusters
Sports Car GT
Star Wars Episode One Racer
Superbike World Champ
Thrust, Twist & Turn
TOCA Touring Cars 2
Viper Racing

GAME • of the • YEAR

VOTING FORM LIFTOUT

ROLE-PLAYING

Nominees:
Baldr's Gate
Battlespire
Fallout 2
Jagged Alliance 2
Might & Magic VII
Return to Krondor
System Shock 2

FLIGHT SIM

Nominees:
Apache Havoc
Dawn of Aces
European Air War
F16 Aggressor
F22 Lightning 3
FA18 Carrier Strike Fighter
Falcon 4
Fighter Pilot
Flight Simulator 2000
Flight Unlimited III
Israeli Air Force
Jetfighter: Full Burn
Luftwaffe Command
Microsoft Combat Flight Sim
MIG Alley
Nations
Novalogic F16 + MIG 29
Red Baron 3D
Thunder Brigade
Top Gun: Hornet's Nest
Total Air War
USAF
WWII Fighters

MISSION PACK

Nominees:
Age of Empires: The Rise of Rome
Baldr's Gate: Tales of the Sword Coast
Commandos: Beyond the Call of Duty
Die by the Sword: Limb from Limb
Freespace: Silent Threat
Grand Theft Auto: London 69
Quake 2: Ground Zero
Rainbow Six: Eagle Watch
Sin: Wages of Sin
Starcraft: Brood Wars
Total Annihilation: Commander
Unreal: Return to Na Pali

FANTASY SIM

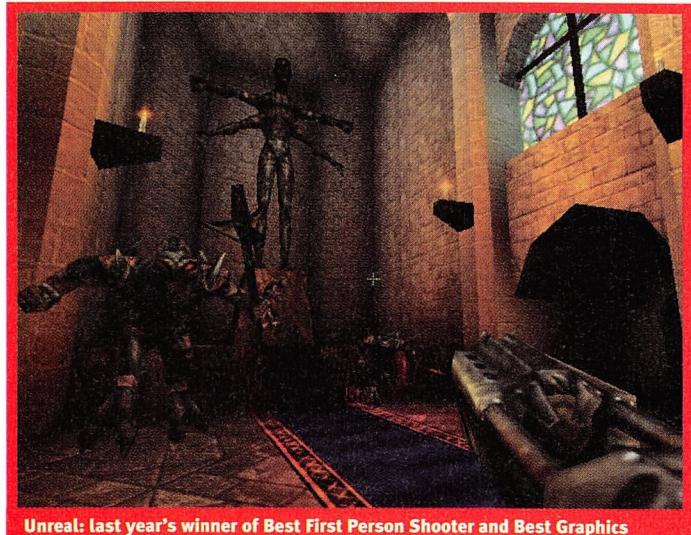
Nominees:
Descent 3
Fatal Abyss
Freespace 2
Heavy Gear 2
I-War Defiance
Lander
Mechwarrior 3
Rogue Squadron
Starsiege
V2000
X-Wing Alliance

ACTION/ADVENTURE

Nominees:
Abe's Exoddus
Asghan
Dark Vengeance
Drakan
Heretic II
King's Quest: Mask of Eternity
Lands of Lore 3
Montezuma's Return
Outcast
Prince of Persia 3D
Redguard
Resident Evil 2
Shadow Man
Silver
Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain
Space Bunnies Must Die
The Fifth Element
The Nomad Soul
The Phantom Menace
Tomb Raider III
Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation
Trespasser

STRATEGIC ACTION

Nominees:
Delta Force
Hidden & Dangerous
Missing in Action
Rainbow Six
Return Fire 2
Rogue Spear
Spearhead
Thief: The Dark Project
Uprising 2



Unreal: last year's winner of Best First Person Shooter and Best Graphics

ADVENTURE

Nominees:
Beavis & Butthead
Beyond Time
Blackstone Chronicles
Dark Side of the Moon
Discworld Noir
Forbidden City
Gabriel Knight: Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned
Grim Fandango
Nightlong: Union City
Conspiracy
Quest for Glory V: Dragon Fire
Reah
Redjack
The Ring



Curse of Monkey Island: Last year's winner of Best Adventure

SPORTS

Nominees:
Actua Tennis
AFL 99
Australian Cricket Captain
Championship Manager 3
Cricket World Cup 99
FIFA 99
Jimmy White's Cueball 2
Links 99
Links 2000
Madden 99
Madden 2000
Microsoft Golf 99

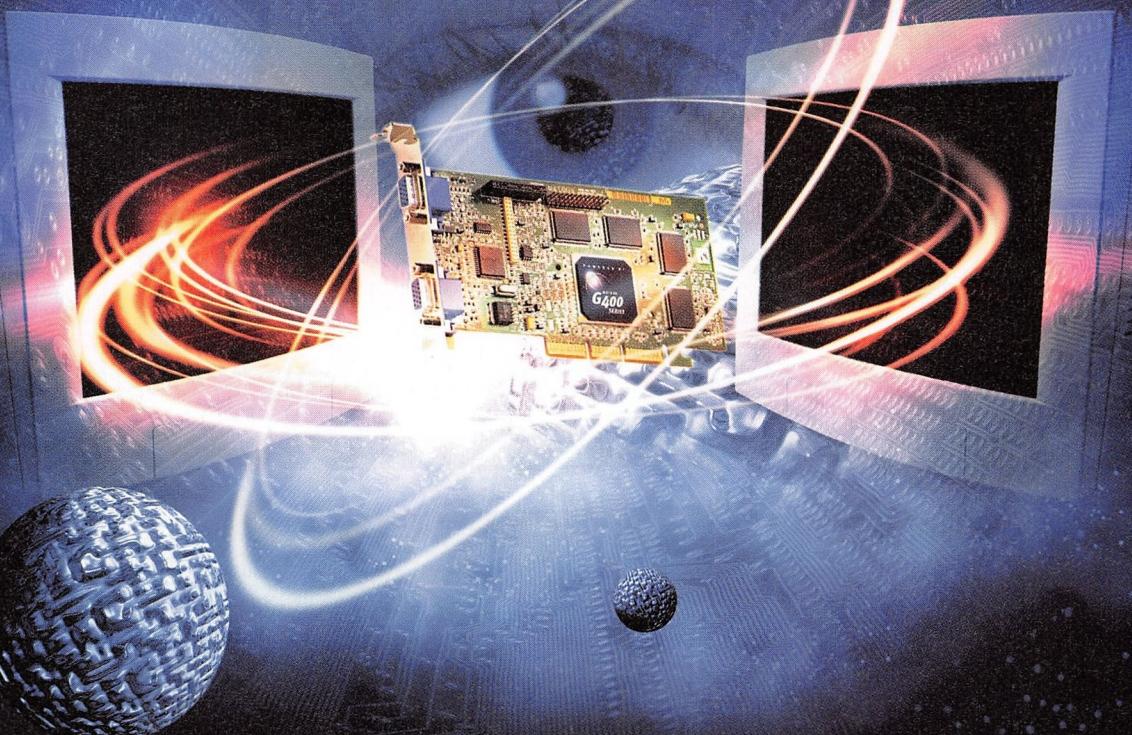
Microsoft International Soccer
Mike Stewart's Bodyboarding
NBA Live 99
NBA 2000
NHL 99
Pro 18 World Tour Golf
Roland Garros Tennis
Shane Warne Cricket 99
Snow Wave Avalanche
Tiger Woods 99
UEFA Champions League 98/99
Virtual Deep Sea Fishing
WCW Nitro

PINBALL

Nominees:
Big Race USA Pro Pinball
Judge Dredd Pinball
Microsoft Pinball Arcade
Pinball Soccer 98

ARCADE

Nominees:
Asteroids
Cluedo
Get Medieval
Global Domination
Hedz
Mortal Kombat 4
Pandemonium 2
Wetrix



Dramatically Different

The new Millennium G400 series High Performance Video Cards

The Fastest

- Explosive 3D, 2D and DVD performance
- The only 256-bit DualBus graphics chip
- Fast AGP acceleration and 16 or 32MB of memory

The Sharpest

- True Environment Mapped Bump Mapping for maximum 3D realism
- Vibrant Color Quality2 32-bit rendering, texturing and Z-buffering
- 300 or 360 MHz UltraSharp DAC for flicker-free displays

The Most Versatile

- Unique DualHead Display supports two independent monitors with one AGP card
- The only card to support 8 combinations of RGB, TV and Flat Panel monitors
- Upgradeable with MJPEG video editing and Digital Flat Panel

In Australia: Top PC Magazines choose Matrox G400



Internationally: G400 Wins Over 100 Press Awards



Australian Distributor
Focal Point Computing Pty Ltd
(03) 9372 6600

www.matrox.com/mga

matrox

SUBSCRIBE

to Australia's PC Games and Entertainment magazine

Quad X-TREME 256R

INNOVISION

Quad X-TREME 256R 4-CHANNEL PCI SOUND CARD

256 R

with Built-in FM Radio

FM Radio Player

108.80

Radio Interface for Quad X-treme 256R Board

THREE TO WIN!

WIN

A SOUNDFORTE QUAD X-TREME SOUND CARD & ALTEC LANSING SPEAKERS

WORTH \$350 EACH

THREE PCPP SUBSCRIBERS OR RENEWERS WILL WIN - GUARANTEED!

The SoundForte Quad X-Treme 256 is an explosive treat that breathes life into your games. With 256 voice wavetable synthesis surrounding you with two pairs of front and rear speakers channels, the effect is so distinctively REAL that you can react to gun-shots coming from behind. The Quad X-Treme 256 is thus the most cost effective, practical, sound solution with the essential features of today's game requirement. It is the real solution for REAL sounds. The Altec Lansing ACS54 features four satellite speakers and a subwoofer to achieve the best results for 3D surround sound. In PCPP#42, we were particularly impressed by the "absolutely meaty" subwoofer, especially its significant weight advantage.

BOTH PRIZES COME COURTESY OF INNOVISION.

BUT - HEY - THE BEST IS YET TO COME:

- Subscribers get Australia's funkiest PC games and technology magazine appearing in their letterbox every month - and we send it a week before it hits the newsstands!
- You also save heaps of money by doing so - up to an amazing 40% off the cover price!
- 12 issues at \$79.95 (save 33%)
- 24 issues at \$139.95 (save 40%)

SUBSCRIBE TO PCPP. YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE.

FILL OUT THIS COUPON (OR USE THE FORM ON THE BACK OF THE CD SLIP) AND MAIL TO:
PC PowerPlay Subscriptions
Reply Paid 634, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016

HOW TO

- For immediate action call toll-free on 1300 361146 Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm EST
- Fax a copy of the completed form, with credit card details, to: 02 9699 0334
- Cut or copy the form and post it with a cheque or money order, or your credit card details, to:
PC PowerPlay Subscriptions
Reply Paid 634
78 Renwick St,
Redfern, NSW 2016
- email your name and address with credit card details to: subs@next.com.au
- subscribe online at <http://publishing.next.com.au/subs>

PLEASE DON'T...

Send subscription cheques and forms in the same envelope as competition entries. No comp. mail is actually opened - that's why we ask you to write the answer on the back, you see...

PLEASE ALLOW 4-6 WEEKS FOR FIRST DELIVERY

ISSUE #42 WINNER (PowerVR2 Neon 250 Video Card)

K Silverwood, Bunbury WA
T. Dance, Connewarre VIC
M. Deare, Blackwood SA

For immediate action call us on
1300 36 11 46
Monday-Friday 9am-6pm EST



Yes! I want to subscribe to PC PowerPlay.
Please enter me in the draw to win a Soundfote Quad X-Treme sound card & Altec Lansing speakers, valued at over \$350.
Offer ends (12th January 2000).

Please tick:

I'd like to subscribe for myself &/Or:
 I'd like to send a gift subscription for:
 12 months (12 issues) at \$79.95 Save one third (like getting 4 issues free!)
 2 years (24 issues) at \$139.95 Save over 40% (like getting 10 issues free!)

Enclosed is a cheque/money order made payable to Next Gaming for \$ _____

OR Charge my credit card:

Visa Mastercard Bankcard

Card Number: _____

Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____

Offer only available to Australian Residents. Expires: 12th January 2000

Please print:

My Full Name: _____

My Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

My Telephone #: () _____

My Email Address: _____

Please send a PowerPlay magazine subscription to:

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Telephone: () _____

Please send a gift card to:

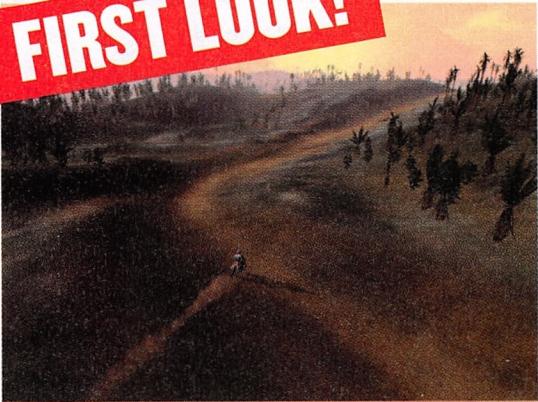
Me (so I can write in it myself)
 Gift Recipient

For conditions of entry, please see page 21.

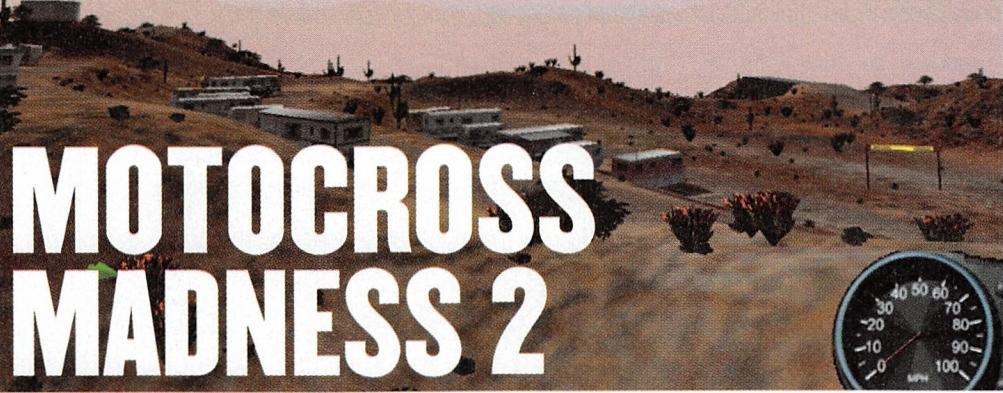
PC044

Terms & Conditions: 1. Entry is open to all residents of Australia & New Zealand except employees and the immediate families of Next Publishing and its agencies associated with the promotion. Entry is by subscription to PC PowerPlay. Only entries completed with these Terms and Conditions will be eligible. 2. Competition begins at 9am on 8th December 1999 and entries close at 6pm on 26th January 2000. 3. In determining eligibility the judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 4. Winner will be drawn manually and at random at 9.00am on 27th January 2000 at Next Publishing Pty Ltd, 78 Renwick Street, Redfern NSW 2016. 5. The prize must be taken as offered and is not redeemable for cash. The promoter does not accept responsibility for lost or misdirected mail. 6. Total value of the prize is \$1050.00. 7. Three winners will each receive one Soundfote Quad X-Treme Sound Card and Altec Lansing Speakers valued at RRP \$350.00. 8. The winners will be notified by mail and the results will be published in the next issue of PC PowerPlay.

FIRST LOOK!



Spotlight



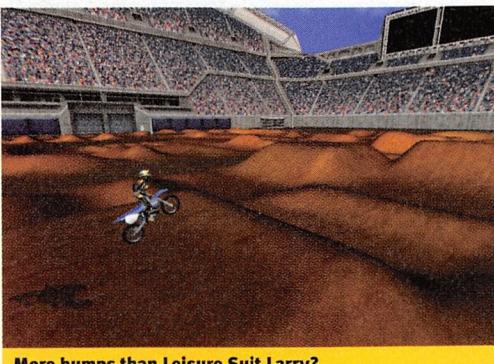
• Genre: Wild Racing • Developer: Rainbow Studios • Due: 2nd Qtr 2000

Rainbow Studios' Motocross Madness sequel is well underway with a slew of new features and enhancements designed to improve upon what was a superior racing game. Foremost among the issues to be addressed is scenery - or rather the lack of it. Although the absence of trackside detail created a certain aesthetically pleasing atmosphere in the original game, it did also nonetheless detract from the gameplay. To compensate for this, the sequel will feature a diverse range of terrain that should affect the handling of the bikes to a tangible degree. Trees, shrubs, hay bales and spectators must be negotiated while completing each track, while weather conditions (including rain and ice) are

sure to provide a new challenge to any player's riding skills.

In a commendable effort to further the lifespan of the single player game, an extensive career mode is planned. Beginning with a cheap, shoddy bike, creditable performances are rewarded with prize money and better sponsorships to upgrade your bike. Yet progress to each subsequent season is only assured by a high placing in the previous one.

Motocross Madness 2 seems set to build upon the strengths of its predecessor, rather than making drastic changes. The new features should add some welcome depth to complement the already fantastic edge-of-your-seat action.



More humps than Leisure Suit Larry?



Quite what these Honey Logs are doing, we don't know.

AUSTRALIA'S MOST WANTED

This month sees Deus Ex relinquish its place in your hearts, as the Team Fortress sequel takes over at the top of the chart. Meanwhile, Quake 3: Arena makes up for last month's surprising no-show by leapfrogging nearly everyone to get the fourth. No sign of Unreal Tournament, though. Send your Top Five Most Wanted Games to wanted@pcpowerplay.next.com.au

Matthew Vincent from Invercargill, New Zealand, is the lucky winner this month, and will be receiving Microsoft's Close Combat Trilogy.

1 TEAM FORTRESS 2

2 Diablo 2

3 Deus Ex

4 Quake 3 Arena

5 Warcraft 3

6 Duke Nukem Forever

7 Dark Reign 2

8 Starsiege: Tribes 2

9 Thief 2

10 Colin McRae Rally 2

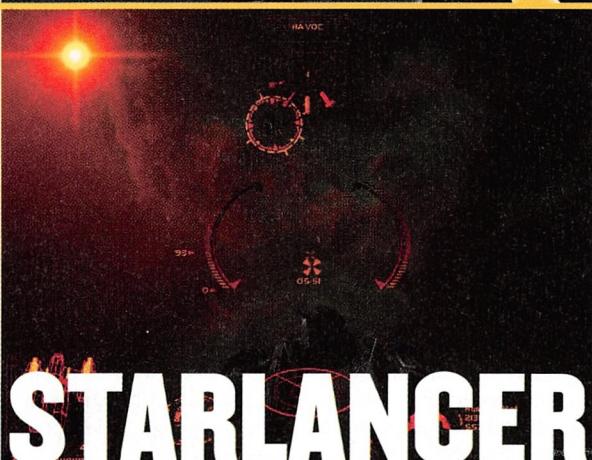
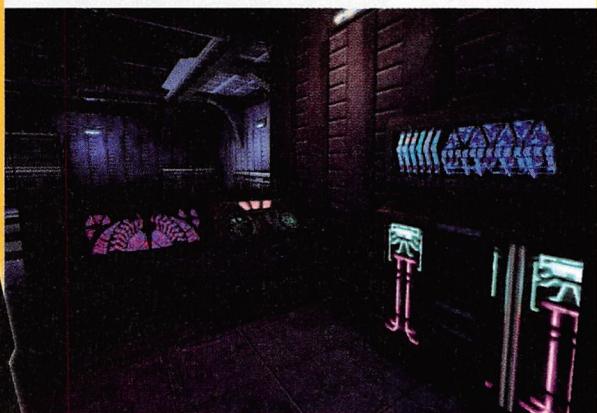
DEEP SPACE NINE: THE FALLEN

FIRST LOOK!

• Genre: Action • Developer: Collective • Due: 1st Qtr 2000

While Deep Space Nine might have finally ended its television run, the series is set to continue in game form thanks to Collective Studios. Ostensibly a first-person action title, The Fallen exercises the Unreal engine to faithfully recreate not only the interior of the DS9 space station, but also a number of terrestrial and outdoor environments. Indicative of this variety in location, one mission takes place on an uncharted tropical planet after the crashlanding of a Starfleet ship. Meanwhile, the renowned Trek political intrigue is sure to play a part in the mission set in a prison run by perennial enemies, the Jem Hadar. DS9 regulars Sisko, Kira and Worf will feature as playable characters.

Unfeasible computer interfaces - must be Star Trek.



STARLANCER

• Genre: Star Trekkin' • Developer: Digital Anvil
• Due: 2nd Qtr 2000

After the recent news that the first of Digital Anvil's anticipated space sims - the other being the even more eagerly-awaited Freelancer - had suffered a significant delay, it was heartening to see a clutch of new screenshots of Starlancer warpspeed their way to the PCPP offices this month. Though these images give a good idea of the intense dogfighting on offer in the main combat sections of the game, Erin Roberts' project extends its ambition beyond laser duels. The idea is for the player to

feel very much part of a "living universe", thus the galaxy is populated by plenty of spacecraft other than you and your enemy. Given the enormous complexity of such an undertaking it's hardly surprising the release date has been postponed for six months.



Nice mood lighting!

INTERSTATE '82

• Genre: Combat Driving • Developer: Pandemic • Due: Dec '99

As these new screenshots testify, Activision's unique game of destructive driving and funky haircuts appears in rather better shape than the early code we took for a test drive two months ago. The diversity evident in these locations impresses, relieving much of the anxiety we felt after viewing the earlier beta of the game. The story involves the disappearance of Groove Champion, the fly guy from I'76, and details the efforts of his sister Skye and



Is that Boy George?

former partner Taurus to mount a rescue. One new gameplay element arrives with Taurus being called upon to park his car at crucial junctures in the game and to attempt the completion of certain missions on foot.



Hey, it's Nik Kershaw!



spotlight

•spotlight

ARCATERA

•Genre: Adventure •Developer: Westka •Due: 1st Qtr 2000



Best sky ever? The crowd assembled in the town square seem to think so.



Initial impressions indicate that Arcatera would appear to be no more than another fantasy adventure game, much in the vein of Quest for Glory or Return to Krondor. However, consider a plot line that more resembles a detective story than a "kill the dragon" quest, involves some Machiavellian political dealings and touches on matters both occult and satanic, and it's clear why this game is worthy of interest. Consider further the fact that it's a real-time adventure, where the citizens of this virtual world go about their daily lives in convincing and believable fashion, and it's obvious why Arcatera positively demands your attention. A contender for the Best Sky Ever award as well.

When all else fails, you can begin destroying American landmarks.



CRIMSON SKIES

•Genre: Dogfighting Action •Developer: Zipper •Due: Mid 2000

Zipper Interactive are perhaps best known for their work on Mechwarrior 3. Earlier this year they jumped ship to Microsoft and began development on a totally different style of game. Crimson Skies is the result.

Although set on Earth in the 1930s, few elements of the game world are recognisable. The story insists upon exploring the possibilities of an alternate history; a kind of parallel universe where the USA is not so united any more and gigantic zeppelins haul their mammoth frames across the sky. It's



a flight sim with a distinct action orientation, with the player assuming the role of a pirate in a game that sounds like Privateer-in-a-biplane.

SERIOUS SAM

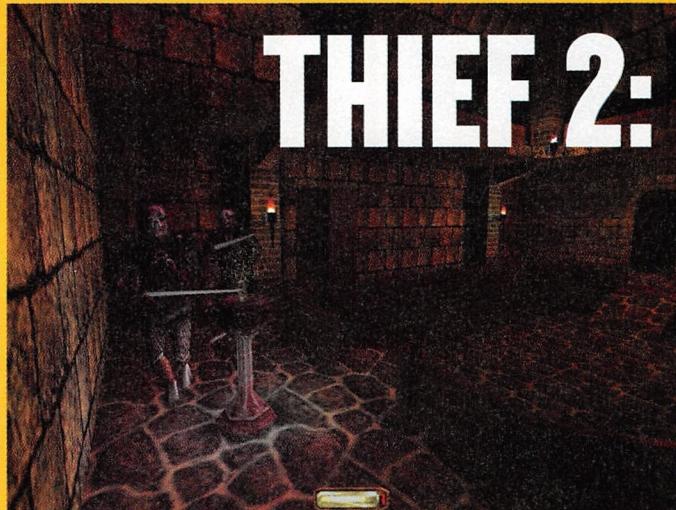
•Genre: Serious Action •Developer: Croteam
•Due: 2nd Qtr 2000

Developed in Croatia with Croteam's own proprietary 3D engine, Serious Sam is a game whose title is very much tongue-in-cheek. While the single player game will apparently boast a strong narrative, the emphasis is very much on the exaggerated destruction caused by an arsenal of absurdly powerful weapons and a hero more akin to Duke Nukem than Gordon Freeman.

Croteam are promising enemies that aren't too bright, but instead have strength in numbers. The reasoning behind this decision is because they want to create a frantic shoot 'em up feel which, they assure us, is far more appropriate to the superhero theme of the game. Serious Sam will definitely have an extremely high bullets-per-second ratio.



We're hoping this turns out to be a 3D version of Robotron.



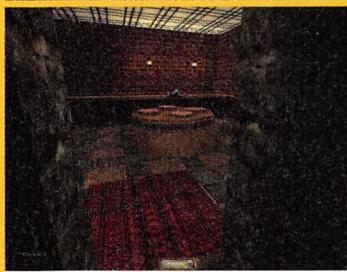
THIEF 2: THE METAL AGE

FIRST LOOK!

• Genre: Stealthy Action • Developer: Looking Glass • Due: 2nd Qtr 2000

■ Expanding on the original game in every conceivable way, the sequel to Thief: The Dark Project is already one of next year's most anticipated titles. During the year long interlude between games, a new faction of Mechanists has emerged to challenge the finely-balanced equation of power previously contested by the Hammerites and the Keepers.

Advanced technology has irrevocably altered the face of the City, with Garrett now forced to deal with numerous steam-powered and mechanical security devices such as cameras and cannons. Best of all, the Eye claimed by Garrett at the conclusion of Thief now functions as a kind of remote camera, increasing his reconnaissance abilities no end.



A table set for four



Zoom in to see the whites of his eyes.



Torches ripe for the picking.



Oops.



Vehicle variety looks strong.



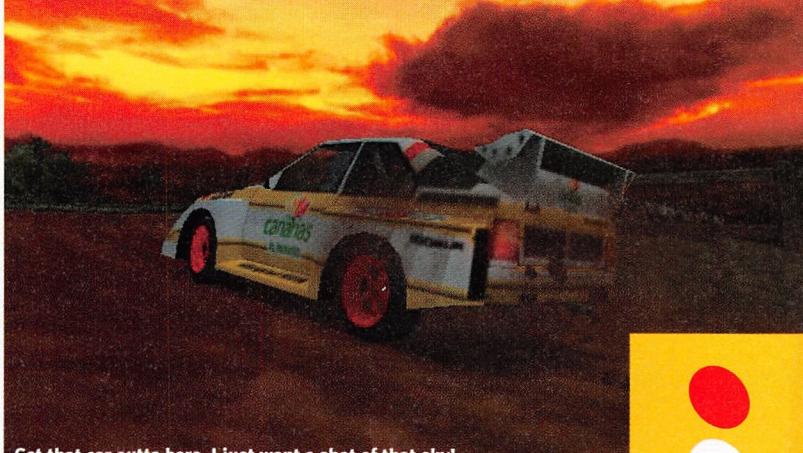
OVERDRIVE

• Genre: Off Road Racing • Developer: Invictus
• Due: Christmas 99

■ To date, off road racing games have enjoyed relatively limited success. Invictus are hoping to turn this trend on its head with Overdrive, a promising game that will introduce some interesting new features to the genre. Instead of racing on tracks, vehicles in Overdrive will race within an extensive array of environments. Various play modes will include Destruction, Capture the Flag and Jamboree (where competitors race to pass through randomly generated gates). While training areas will be relatively flat, many races will occur in mountainous terrain where steep inclines and precipitous drops are the norm. Vehicles will range from dune buggies to military transport trucks, and there'll be a heavy emphasis on multiplayer support.



RALLY MASTERS



Get that car outta here, I just want a shot of that sky!

• Genre: Rally Sim • Developer: Digital Illusions • Due: March 2000

■ With more than a handful of titles currently under development, rally gamers are in for a treat in the coming months. Rally Masters will feature 24 real world drivers and over 17 real world cars. However, the player's performance will be affected by driver choice as opposed to car choice. An interesting twist to be sure. In addition to standard rally tracks, the game will also feature indoor stadium special stages. Another innovation will be the inclusion of a custom track editor. While all but one of the tracks are fictional, there's little doubt that serious rally aficionados will set to work diligently recreating each real track from aerial photographs and design blueprints the moment this game hits the shelves.



spotlight



Barbarian

Living on the fringes of civilisation, the Barbarian has developed superior battle tactics in order to survive. In fact, he believes he can call upon the totemic animal spirits to infuse him with supernormal strengths and abilities.

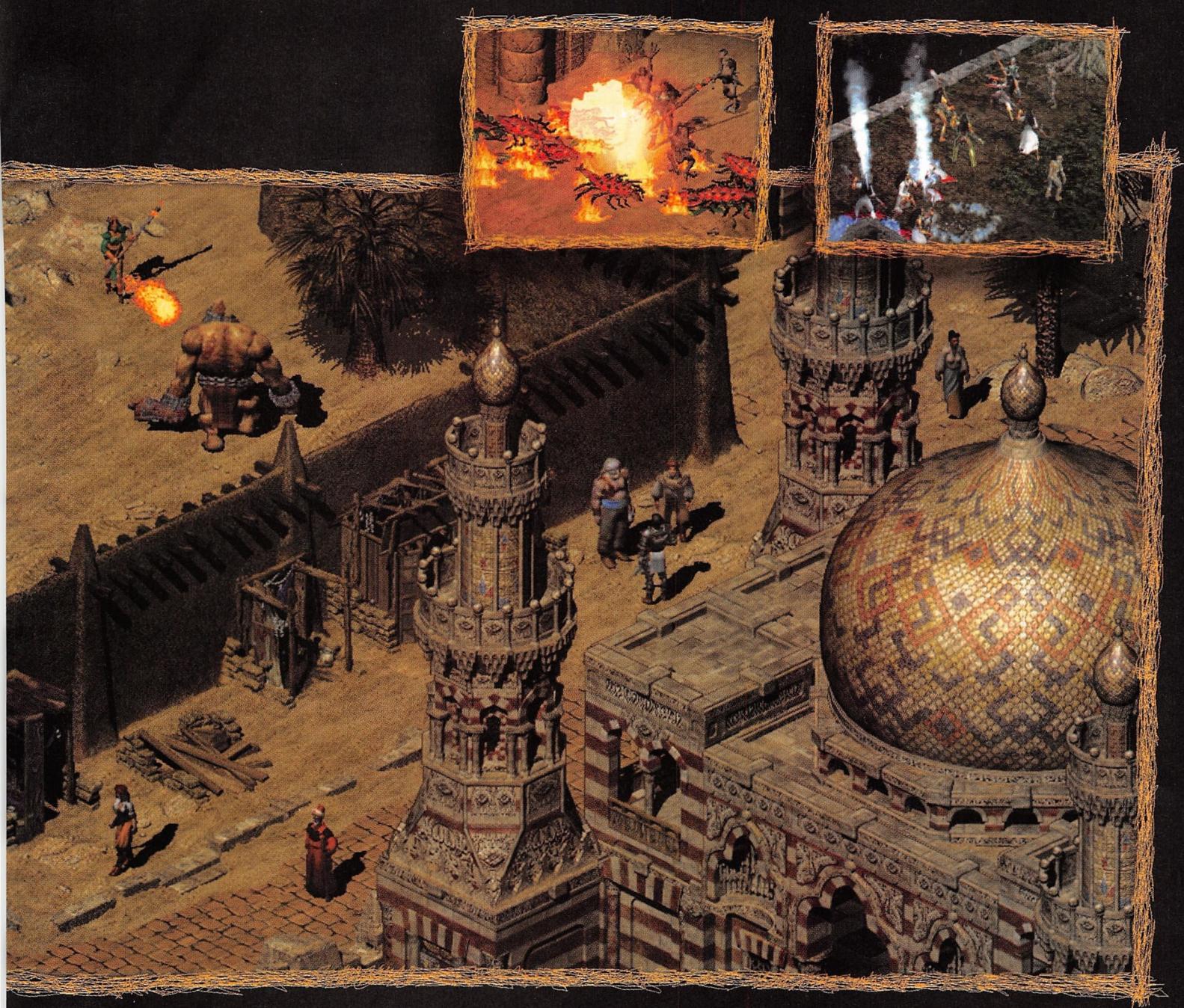
BLIZZARD
ENTERTAINMENT

www.blizzard.com

Proudly Distributed By

dataflow
Setting the Standard!

Diablo, Blizzard Entertainment are trademarks or registered trademarks of Davidson & Associates in the United States and/or other countries. All rights reserved.



DIABLO

TM

Vengeance Was Only The Beginning.

GAM OF TH CENT TOP 50 GAMES O



ME HE JURY F ALL TIME



Over the past twenty years, we've all witnessed the inexorable rise of computer entertainment from humble text-based origins to the dizzying heights of today's multi-sensory extravaganzas. As the 20th century draws to a close, PC games have confirmed their rightful place at the nadir of human endeavour.

But one crucial question remains, however. Which is the best?

In late 1999, the PC PowerPlay crew gathered to debate this very issue. Carefully considered discussion soon gave way to fiercely fought argument, as the merit of each and every game ever released was scrutinised under our collective critical gaze. Assessment was based on a broad range of criteria. Historical significance carried a substantial amount of weight, as did a game's lasting influence on those that followed. Similarly, innovation, in terms of both technology and gameplay design, was looked upon very favourably. Obviously, though, probably the most important element was that any game in contention for the final fifty had to be bloody great fun to play.

After the judicious application of all factors, we arrived at the following definitive selection. In descending order, then, we present to you the Best 50 Games of All Time...

The Games of the Century were compiled by Ben Mansill, March Stepnik, David Wildgoose, Ed Fox, Brett Robinson, John Dewhurst, Pete Sharpe, Ashton Mills, Major Des McNicholas, and Ewan Corness.

THE GAME OF THE CENTURY QUIZ

So you think you know games? Well, here's your chance to prove it. Over the next dozen pages, we've compiled 25 of the most mind-bendingly difficult questions to test the depths of your gaming knowledge. The Game of the Century Quiz has been designed to separate the men from the boys, the hardcore gamers from the dilettantes, and the Prumpies from the posers. You know who you are.

What better way to celebrate this fabulous century of gaming than by giving away an equally fabulous prize. You'll have to turn to page 47 to find out what you could win, though. We can't tell you now, of course, it'll spoil the surprise. And, hey, no peeking!

GAME OF THE CENTURY

TOP 50 GAMES OF ALL TIME

DEVELOPER'S FAVES

DOUG CHURCH (LOOKING GLASS)

Doug Church is the Lead Programmer at Looking Glass Studios. He is currently working on Thief 2: The Metal Age.

NHL HOCKEY

(Jim Simmons, EA, Sega Genesis)

The first sports game which really worked for me. Good hard checks and slapshots were a total blast. It felt right.

THE INCREDIBLE MACHINE

(Jeff Tunnell, Dynamix, PC)

A simulation puzzler, the player improvised and experimented with an amusing and interesting toolbox.

ULTIMA IV

(Richard Garriott, Origin, PC)

I've really enjoyed all the Ultimas. But were I to have to pick one, this would be it.

WING COMMANDER I

(Chris Roberts, Origin, PC)

Arcade space shooters are great things, and early Wing Commanders did it well, blending a simple, quick story with high speed action.

MONKEY ISLAND 2: LECHUCK'S REVENGE

(Ron Gilbert, LucasArts, PC)

The Monkey Island games were great, with style, excellent sarcasm, and just plain fun. Graphical adventure games annoy me, but I loved this series.

WIZARDRY I

(Andrew Greenberg and Robert Woodhead, Sir-Tech, PC)

I'm pretty sick of mapping out every inch of a big dungeon by now, but I mapped every inch of this dungeon and loved it.

SIMCITY

(Will Wright, Maxis, PC)

Genius.

CHRONOTRIGGER

(SquareSoft, SNES)

Chrono best balanced Square's pre-scripted linear story/character stuff with varied

QUIZ

1. The adult cinema in **Duke Nukem 3D** was showing which film?
2. What were the two playable characters called in **Alone in the Dark**?
3. What were the names of the trials of St. Francis' Folly in **Tomb Raider**?
4. How many seconds are you given to escape a **Descent II** mine after destroying the reactor?

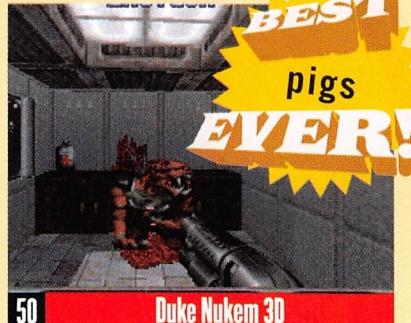
50. DUKE NUKEM 3D

Developer: 3D Realms

Released: 1996

Reviewed: PCPP#3 90%

■ The infamous Duke Nukem 3D vs Quake war surprisingly produced no clear victor. The reason: Duke Nukem has character (however cheesy), greater environment interaction and a wonderful attention to detail. If the Build engine could've managed mouselook, the Duke may have even ended up as the King.



50 **Duke Nukem 3D**

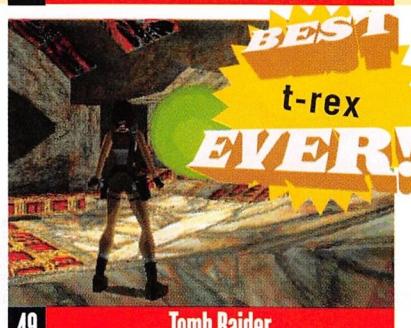
49. TOMB RAIDER

Developer: Core

Released: 1996

Reviewed: PCPP#9 94%

■ It is a common misconception that Tomb Raider enjoyed so much success due to the marketing-friendly Lara Croft and plenty of hype. Wrong. Lara entranced many a gamer with her 3D, Prince of Persia influenced action long before she became a gaming icon.



49 **Tomb Raider**

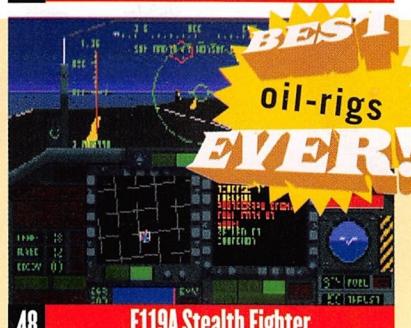
48. F119A STEALTH FIGHTER

Developer: Microprose

Released: 1990

Reviewed: N/A

■ The first ever military flight sim to actually deliver a convincing jet aircraft combat experience. And when the difficult mission objectives seemed too difficult to meet, the many stationary and unarmed oil rigs made for great target practice.



48 **F119A Stealth Fighter**

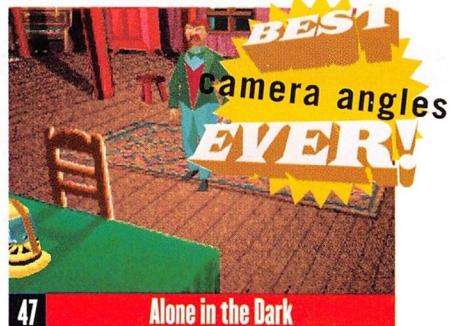
47. ALONE IN THE DARK

Developer: Infogrames

Released: 1992

Reviewed: N/A

■ The first genuinely scary PC game, Alone in the Dark was an early masterpiece of inventive design. Stealing wholesale from horror literature and cinema classics, Frederik Raynal created a chilling tale of unspeakable madness, undead monsters, and the macabre.



47 **Alone in the Dark**

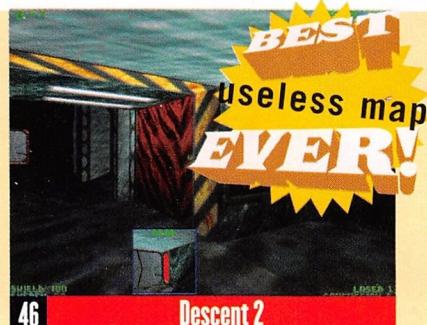
46. DESCENT 2

Released: 1996

Developer: Parallax/Volition

Reviewed: PCPP#1 9/10

■ Before Quake hit us with its true 3D first person engine, Descent had already refined its mastery of 3D space. And the sequel simply excelled in every respect: schizophrenically devised maps, vicious enemy bots and a terrifying atmosphere that has been rarely equalled (or beaten) since.



46 **Descent 2**

50-41



45. STARCRAFT

Developer: Blizzard

Released: 1998

Reviewed: PCPP#25 92%

■ Offering three distinct races to play (as opposed to the normal one and a half), StarCraft gave us a welcome alternative to the many pseudo-realistic strategy games on offer. Proved that a gripping story can be interwoven with visceral action, to spectacular results.



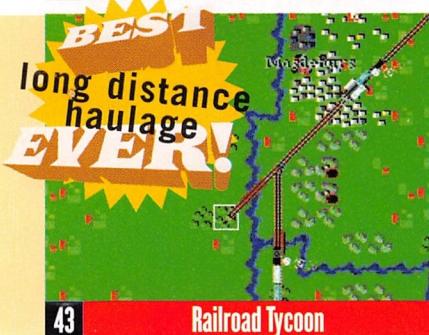
44. TERMINATOR: FUTURE SHOCK

Developer: Bethesda

Released: 1996

Reviewed: PCPP#1 9/10

■ Before Half-Life, this was the game that reinvented the first-person shooter. The compelling narrative, proper mission objectives, the slower - almost tactical - pace and the expansive, non-linear environments made this the original "thinking man's shoot 'em up".



43. RAILROAD TYCOON

Developer: Microprose

Released: 1992

Reviewed: N/A

■ Not quite containing the vast magnitude of Civilization, Railroad Tycoon entered the fray with a shiny new concept and a glorious interface. Was responsible for thousands upon thousands of people developing a sneaky new obsession with trains.



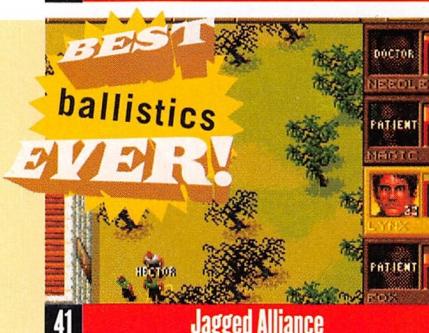
42. WORMS 2

Developer: Team 17

Released: 1997

Reviewed: PCPP#19 90%

■ Turn-based strategy was never quite so... bloody funny. With its ludicrous arsenal of weapons (pistols, dynamite, sheep, pensioners, marching bands, you know), Worms 2 took the age-old Tank game formula to all new heights. A contender for the best multiplayer game ever.



41. JAGGED ALLIANCE

Developer: Sirtech

Released: 1995

Reviewed: N/A

■ The true potential of JA became apparent only after a few hours of play. Lavishes a totally original concept with heaps of playability and those electrifying strategy/shoot the bad-guys bits.

possibilities. Time travelling to see your actions changing history added to the sense of impact.

LODE RUNNER

(Doug Smith, Broderbund, PC)

Simple mechanic, lots of levels, good balance of challenges to think through and arcade-y running around twitch play.

WORLD WAR II

(Carla Menisky, Atari, Atari 2600)

Just great 4 player. Incredibly simple, but playable forever.

ENCHANTER

(Mark Blank and Dave Lebling, Infocom, PC)

Easily my favourite of the text adventures.

(Ok, this is 11, and a Pinball machine, but hey...)

CYCLONE

(Python Anghelo and Barry Oursler, Williams, Pinball)

An almost perfect late 80s pinball machine. Many strategies to score well, fast table, some timing shots and some precision shots. And great sound.

CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR

Many of you will no doubt be surprised by not only some of the games that made our Top 50, but some of those that didn't. The trouble is there have been thousands upon thousands of computer games released in the past twenty years, so trimming them down to a mere fifty was always going to leave plenty of favourites out in the cold. Here are a few of the more notable omissions:

BIG RACE USA

Despite tireless lobbying from the pinball faction in the office for what is surely the best pinball sim, it was nevertheless deemed to be too much of a niche title for inclusion.

DIABLO

Blizzard's RPG-lite was fun while it lasted yet long term play managed to expose the shallowness of its core gameplay.

GAME ~ OF THE ~ CENTURY

TOP 50 GAMES OF ALL TIME

DEVELOPER'S FAVES

JONATHAN CHEY
(IRRATIONAL GAMES)

Jonathan Chey was the Project Manager for Irrational's System Shock 2. He is presently back in Australia for a holiday.

CIVILISATION 2

The best strategy game of all time, Sid Meier's finest effort. Every game mechanic is pure genius.

X-COM

A brilliant marriage between a high level strategic meta-game and a tactical combat engine. Includes cool role-playing elements and a "dynamic storyline".

DOOM

Genre-defining and still the greatest first person shooter ever made. A perfect blend of art, programming and chainsaws.

ULTIMA UNDERWORLD

Launched Looking Glass' line of deep 3D world simulations. Stunningly immersive world, great gameplay.

HALF LIFE

The evolution of the first-person shooter. An incredible design achievement, only let down by a weak ending.

MYTH

Great, tightly balanced gameplay, cool severed head physics, fantastic multiplayer mayhem.

THIEF

Defined the stealth genre. Another technical, design and aesthetic statement from Looking Glass and Doug Church.

CLOSE COMBAT 2

The greatest PC wargame of all time. Real time tactics far better than all the C&C clones.

DUNGEON MASTER

Ahead of its time, 3D party based role-playing at its best with a great magic system. Coolest feature: eating the flesh of your enemies.

SPEEDBALL 2

The greatest sports game ever to appear on the PC. Just the right mixture of skill and ultra-violence.

QUIZ

5. What structure provided power to your *Dune 2* base?
6. What does "mein lieben" mean, as spoken in *Wolfenstein*?
7. What is the name of your home village in *Fallout 2*?

40. EF 2000

Developer: DiD

Released: 1995

Reviewed: N/A

■ A massive leap in technical accuracy over prequel TFX, EF2000 also stole Falcon 4.0's thunder, pioneering the first usable virtual cockpit, plus a swathe of other graphical effects. Other firsts include in-flight refuelling, plus the impressive modelling of the EF2000's starship avionics.



40 EF 2000

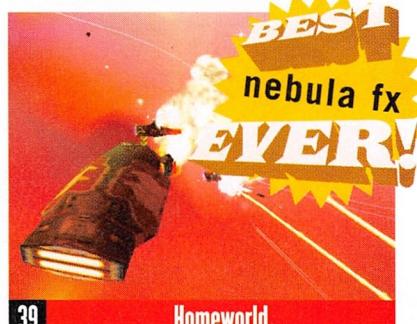
39. HOMeworld

Developer: Relic Entertainment

Released: 1999

Reviewed: PCPP#41 95%

■ Homeworld put the majesty into computer-generated space environments. While it's undisputed that the breath-taking visuals are Homeworld's major drawcard, Relic Entertainment have also succeeded in bringing abrasive RTS combat within the challenging freedom of 3D space.



39 Homeworld

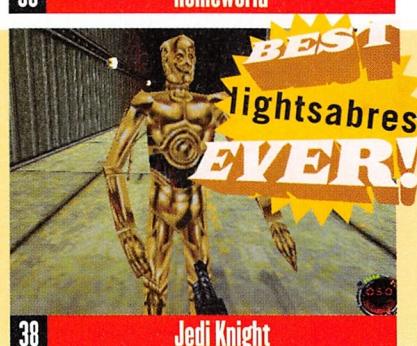
38. DARK FORCES II: JEDI KNIGHT

Developer: LucasArts

Released: 1997

Reviewed: PCPP #18 95%

■ Used a fantastic 3D game engine, which handled vast outdoor environments with the greatest of ease. Featured a fantastic storyline and was set in each corner of the Star Wars universe. And really, the ability to wield the ultimate close-combat weapon - a lightsabre - was reason enough for many.



38 Jedi Knight

37. DUNE 2

Developer: Westwood Studios

Released: 1992

Reviewed: N/A

■ While not technically the first RTS, Dune 2 was the game that grabbed us by the balls with its magnetic gameplay. After years of turn-based hex grids for our warmaking, the joy of drag and clicking was a revelation. A lack of multiplayer support holds it back a bit, but the same factor did spawn a new breed of deathmatch games.



37 Dune 2

36. BATTLEZONE

Developer: Pandemic

Released: 1998

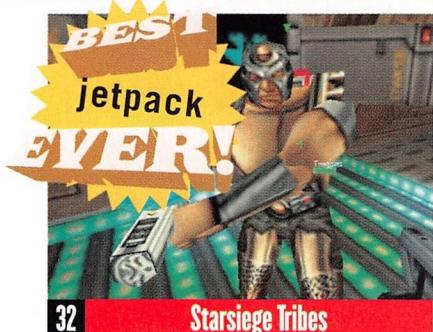
Reviewed: PCPP#20 90%

■ Taking only its name from the ancient arcade shooter, Battlezone gave us the definitive blueprint for the nascent action/strategy genre. No other strategy game has quite succeeded in throwing you slap-bang in the midst of a visceral, intense warzone.



36 Battlezone

40-31



35. COMANCHE

Developer: Nova Logic

Released: 1992

Reviewed: N/A

■ Unashamedly arcade, but nevertheless embraced by the serious simmers due to the irresistably lush graphics. Voxel graphics were introduced with Comanche, and the old classic still looks better than many new hardware accelerated games. Cool missions and lots of them made Comanche a complete winner.

34. MECHWARRIOR 2

Developer: Activision

Released: 1995

Reviewed: N/A

■ Huge hulking mechanical behemoths with guns! What more could you ask for? In multi or single player, this game delivered the thrill of piloting these mechanical beasts like no other.

33. WOLFENSTEIN 3D

Developer: id Software

Released: 1991

Reviewed: PCPP#25 10/10

■ The mighty Wolfenstein's place in this list was always assured for two reasons. One, it was id's first 3D game and thus paved the way for Doom, Quake, and every other first-person shooter ever since. Two, you could shoot Nazis. And their dogs. Lovely.

32. STARSIEGE TRIBES

Developer: Dynamix

Released: 1999

Reviewed: PCPP #35 88%

■ All the excitement of Quake and strategy of an RTS have been wonderfully melded together in this original multiplayer title. With a host of features designed around a "tactical" perspective, Tribes breathed new life into the FPS genre.

31. FALLOUT 2

Developer: Black Isle Studios

Released: 1998

Reviewed: PCPP#32 88%

■ Strong and traditional role-playing in a non-traditional guise. Did everything that Fallout did, but better. Features a huge, non-linear gameworld that can take months to explore. Asserted with style that an RPG need not be enslaved within the fantasy setting.

CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR

ELITE

A brilliant and quite fantastically enormous experiment in gaming, David Braben's space trading sim is a classic. Shame, then, that no one played it on the PC, most preferring the C64 version.

SAM & MAX

It was a close run thing between Lucasarts' point-and-click adventures with this, Indy and Monkey Island bearing strong claims. In the end, though, we felt that the Tentacle had all the best jokes.

SPORTS GAMES

Although many fine sports games have graced the PC, their appeal remains obviously limited to fans of the particular sport. If we put a golf sim in the list, why not soccer or ice hockey?

SYNDICATE

Bullfrog's finest moment. Sadly, its undernourished campaign meant only the most determined ever saw it to the end.

TOTAL ANNIHILATION

TA has plenty of fans, but it's still a personality free zone.

UNREAL

Sure, Epic gave us a technical marvel. However, the ground-breaking 3D engine couldn't hide the lack of substance in the gameplay department.

X-COM: ENEMY UNKNOWN

A great game in its own right, though slightly bettered by the eerily similar Jagged Alliance.

X-WING ALLIANCE

Despite the terrific Star Wars flavour, Alliance failed to add anything truly new to the space combat genre.

GAME OF THE CENTURY

TOP 50 GAMES OF ALL TIME

DEVELOPER'S FAVES

WARREN SPECTOR

(ION STORM)

Warren Spector heads up Ion Storm's Austin office, where he is Executive Producer on *Deus Ex*. And, erm, he can really talk...

DIABLO

I can't remember the last time I started playing a game at 9 p.m. and looked up from my computer, shocked, to discover it was 10 a.m. THE NEXT DAY. The fact that

Diablo convinced a lot of sales and marketing people that roleplaying games could make money didn't bother me a bit!

HALF LIFE

Taking what we tried to do in *System Shock* a step further, *Half Life* had a level of polish I find awe-inspiring. Valve created a game that convinced the masses that immersive reality simulation could be fun and paved the way for games like *Shock 2*, *Deus Ex* and others to come. If it wasn't for the goofy alien environments at the end, *Half Life* would have been very nearly perfect.

LEGEND OF OASIS

(Sega Saturn)

A guilty pleasure. Realtime action, great graphics, a kind of old-school *Zelda*-like flavor with a more adult sensibility (okay, YOUNG adult) and no cutesiness to be found.

LEGEND OF ZELDA

(Super Nintendo)

The Greatest Gaming Experience I've Ever Had. Forget about *Zelda 64*. This is the real deal. I don't even know where to start singing this game's praises so I won't even try. If you haven't played it just go buy a SNES and play. NOW.

MARIO 64

(Nintendo 64)

I hate Shigeru Miyamoto. This game has a bit too much running around searching for some obscure thing you have to do. But just a bit. I confess, I haven't finished it. I got stopped at about 60-odd stars, but that doesn't matter. There's an elegance to the way this game is constructed that I find almost depressingly unattainable. Miyamoto sets the benchmark for the rest of us.

QUIZ

8. Which natural disasters could befall your city in *Sim City*?
9. *Twinsen*'s house is located on which island in the world of Twinsun?
10. Which creature would most likely win in a one-on-one between Black Dragon and a Titan in *Heroes of Might & Magic II*?
11. Britannia's Shrine of Compassion was carefully tended to by which young lady in *Ultima VII*?
12. The *Aces Over Europe* intro featured which type of aircraft?

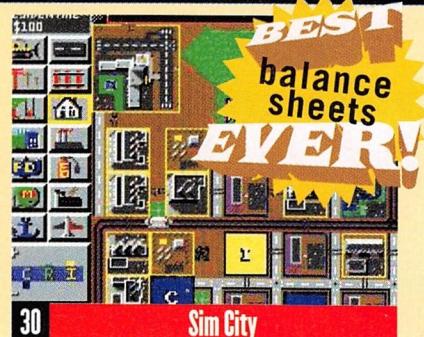
30. SIM CITY

Developer: Maxis

Released: 1989

Reviewed: N/A

■ Less a game than a digital toy set, Will Wright's epochal city-building simulation has been sequelled yet never bettered by its (over-complicated) descendants. Remember the water pipes? Ugh. The simple, open-ended, flawless original remains the best.



30 Sim City

29. ACES OVER EUROPE

Developer: Dynamix

Released: 1989

Reviewed: N/A

■ Back when flight sims ruled the world, Dynamix had our hearts with a string of winning 'Aces' games. AOE featured the most complete mission and aircraft sets. 486 owners could fly in the high res 'Tall Mode' too, although this game's charm was the pure dogfighting gameplay.



29 Aces over Europe

28. PRINCE OF PERSIA

Developer: Jordan Mechner

Released: 1989

Reviewed: N/A

■ In 1989, programming prodigy Jordan Mechner showed the world that the PC could cater for fast-paced action games. With peerless animation, imaginative level design, and intuitive controls, the Prince of Persia is one of gaming's all-time greats.



28 Prince of Persia

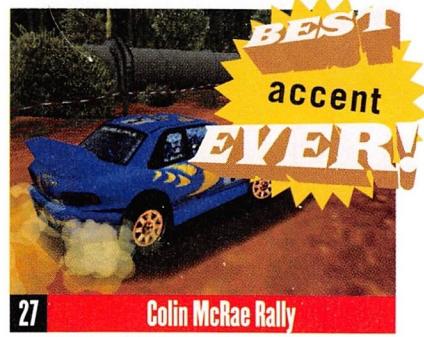
27. COLIN MCRAE RALLY

Developer: Codemasters

Released: 1997

Reviewed: PCPP#30 90%

■ Through the haze of dull and lifeless rally simulations came Colin McRae Rally! Setting the benchmark for all rally titles to follow, nothing has since matched the pure quality and heart-pounding action manifested in this sim.



27 Colin McRae Rally

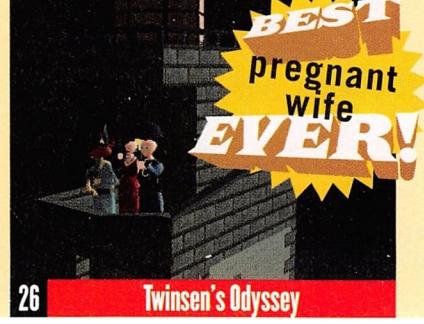
26. TWINSEN'S ODYSSEY

Developer: Adeline

Released: 1997

Reviewed: PCPP#15 84%

■ Games don't get any cuter than this. Or weirder. Our pony-tailed hero's quest to save Twinsun from alien invasion resulted in the most sublime mix of action and adventuring since, well... the first one. This sequel edges out the original because it's got Twinsen's car.

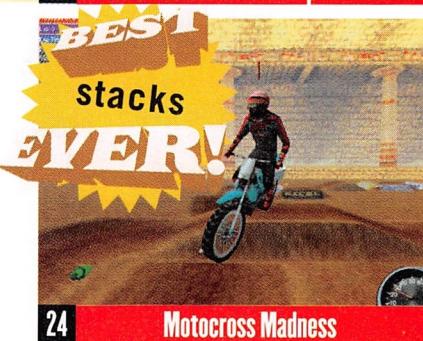


26 Twinsen's Odyssey

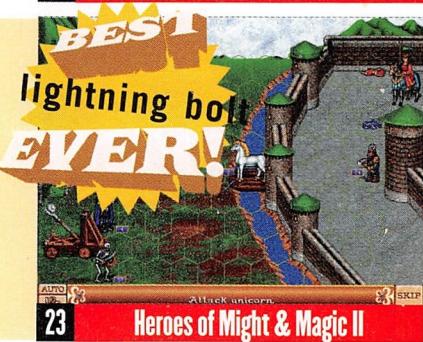
30-21



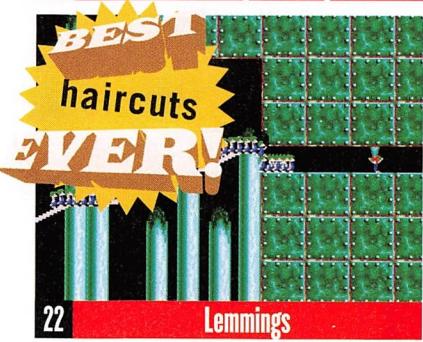
25 Command & Conquer



24 Motocross Madness



23 Heroes of Might & Magic II



22 Lemmings



21 Ultima VII

25. COMMAND & CONQUER

Developer: Westwood

Released: 1995

Reviewed: N/A

■ Ahh... the smell of Tiberium in the morning! Command & Conquer took everything that made Dune 2 such a smash hit and tweaked it until it became the addictive entity it is today. It was so well received that Westwood didn't need to do much to the formula with C&C's two subsequent sequels.

24. MOTOCROSS MADNESS

Developer: Rainbow Studios

Released: 1998

Reviewed: PCPP#30 94%

■ Most of the tracks don't have any scenery, but it doesn't matter one bit. Motocross Madness gives you the most exhilarating white-knuckle ride on two wheels. Although, considering the stupendous amount of air-time you see in the game, make that no wheels as well.

23. HEROES OF MIGHT & MAGIC II

Developer: New World Computing

Released: 1996

Reviewed: PCPP#10 88%

■ It's a scientific fact that Heroes of Might & Magic shouldn't work, for it features: orcs, simple turn-based combat, overly cutesy graphics, orcs, a basic economic model, medieval lute music, orcs, and - yes - orcs. But we can't stop playing the damn thing. Forget science and stick with fantasy.

22. LEMMINGS

Developer: Psygnosis

Released: 1991

Reviewed: N/A

■ Everyone played Lemmings - or should have. Ingenious throughout, Lemmings had a powerfully magnetic effect after just a few minutes play. There's still nothing like it. Capable of endearing great concern for the little critters from the crustiest old gamer. One of the few games Ben's actually completed.

21. ULTIMA VII - THE BLACK GATE

Developer: Origin

Released: 1992

Reviewed: N/A

■ With its lush visuals, scope of detail and interaction (let's bake bread!), and a story line ahead of its time - Ultima VII is oft regarded as the pinnacle of third-person fantasy role playing gaming. Even though your party members were a bunch of greedy-guts.

SUIKODEN

(Sony Playstation)

The guiltiest of pleasures. I can run down this game's flaws as easily as I can its strengths and yet I was spellbound by it. The music was great. The characters were vivid. The story was compelling. The build-your-castle and choose-your-allies systems were incredible. The choices the designers threw in your path posed some real moral dilemmas.

SYSTEM SHOCK

It's a little self-serving to include a game I worked on in a list like this, I guess, but working on Shock was one of the high points of my life. The team was great. The game ended up living up to nearly all of our design goals (well, the interface was kind of a lose...). Like Star Raiders years before, Shock made players believe they were on Citadel station. I'm just intensely proud of Shock and my role in its creation.

ULTIMA IV

(Apple)

This was the first game I played where I got the sense that computer games could do more than allow me to kill lots of things in new and unique ways. The introduction of ethics into an interactive experience seems obvious to me now. It was anything but obvious to anyone when U4 came out. In gameplay, U4 was an okay game but Richard Garriott changed the world just a bit by forcing players to think about the consequences of their actions. And that's something more game developers need to attend to, even now.

ULTIMA UNDERWORLD

Again, a bit self-serving but, as the first realtime, 3D texture-mapped, first-person perspective game ever, I felt throughout development like the Underworld team was changing the world just a little bit. This was also my first opportunity to work with Doug

Church who, I have to say, is the most talented individual I've ever worked with.

WARCRAFT II

I love strategy games, especially real-time strategy games. And, while I can look at Command & Conquer or any number of Sid Meier games and see, perhaps, a more elegant game or a better balanced one, no game has made me laugh so hard WHILE I was sweating up a storm and stinking of adrenaline as Warcraft II did. Wanna reduce me to hysterical laughter? Just say "zug zug" and I'm rolling on the floor.

GAME ~ OF THE ~ CENTURY

TOP 50 GAMES OF ALL TIME

DEVELOPER'S FAVES

MARK REIN
(EPIC)

SIM CITY

COMMAND & CONQUER

WING COMMANDER

COMMANDER KEEN

THE GAME THAT GOT ME
INTO GAMING:
DOOM

TIM SWEENEY
(EPIC)

DOOM

HERETIC II

ZORK III

ADVENTURE (ATARI 2600)

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

CLIFF BLESZINSKI
(EPIC)

SYSTEM SHOCK 2

THE SECRET OF MONKEY
ISLAND

ULTIMA UNDERWORLD

DOOM

SIM CITY

QUIZ

13. Name the only non-FWD car in **TOCA 2**.
14. In **Day of the Tentacle**, what was the name of the inflatable clown?
15. In which **Wing Commander** game did Mark Hamill make his debut?
16. In **Civilization**, how long would a 100% complete colony ship take to reach Alpha Centauri?
17. Who were the ill-fated lovers in **System Shock 2**'s most compelling side story?
18. Which car sported the No.1 badge in **Grand Prix 2**?

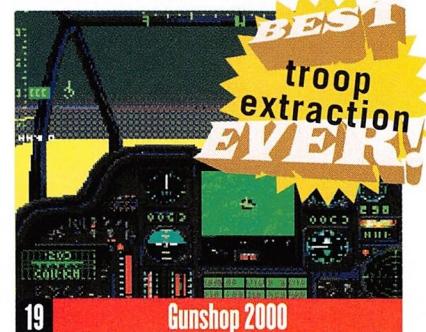
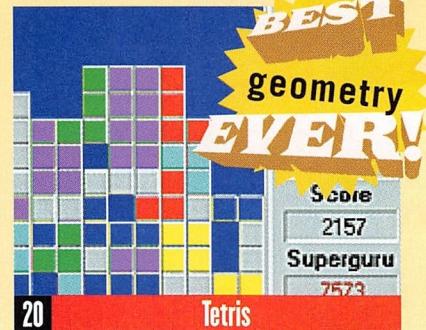
20. TETRIS

Developer: Alexey Pajitnov

Released: 1987

Reviewed: N/A

■ Everyone knows Tetris. Funny-shaped blocks fall down the screen for you to guide into position to make lines, which then disappear to clear the way for more funny-shaped blocks to fall down the screen for you to guide into position... The most addictive game on earth.



19. GUNSHIP 2000

Developer: Microprose

Released: 1990

Reviewed: N/A

■ Microprose demonstrated their ability to out-do all expectations with GS2000. From the humble beginnings of the original Gunship, GS2000 added a depth of gameplay that was never seen before in the industry. With dynamic campaigns and multiple choppers, it teemed with playability.



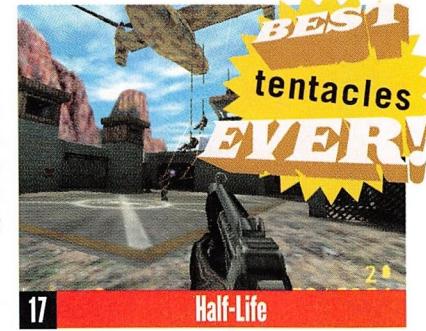
18. TOCA 2

Developer: Codemasters

Released: 1998

Reviewed: PCPP #37 91%

■ Fast-paced driving combined with stunning hardware-accelerated visuals, TOCA 2 is a clear demonstration of those rare occasions where the sequel outdoes the original. For fun, tight, action packed racing, you can't go past this title.



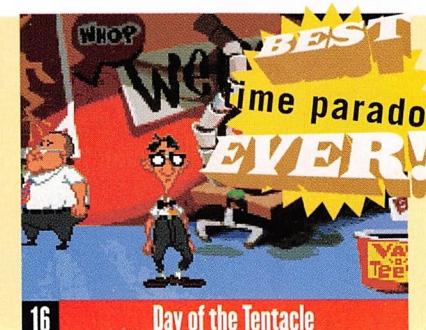
17. HALF-LIFE

Developer: Valve

Released: 1998

Reviewed: PCPP#31 98%

■ Gordon Freeman's crusade against aliens, SWAT teams and the occasional pissed-off drink machine set the benchmark for excellence in single player first person shooters. Contained an excellent storyline filled with plot twists and lots of suspense.



16. DAY OF THE TENTACLE

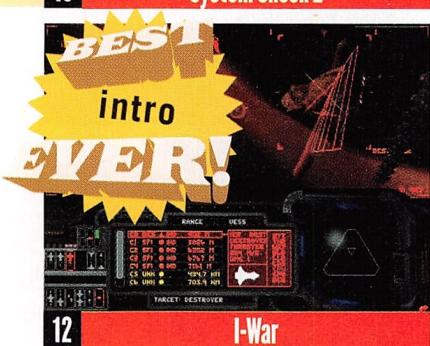
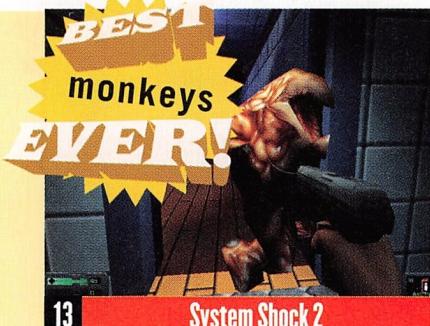
Developer: Lucasarts

Released: 1993

Reviewed: N/A

■ Lucasarts' finest - and funniest - moment. Tells the adventures of Bernard, Laverne and Hoagie as they travel through time to save the world from the vile Purple Tentacle, inadvertently writing the American Constitution along the way. The cleverest puzzles in adventure gaming history.

20-11



15. WING COMMANDER

Developer: Origin

Released: 1990

Reviewed: N/A

■ As tinkle music poured from the infant Sound Blaster, the words "A Chris Roberts Production" appeared and we grabbed the joystick, psyched to pump more Mass Driver rounds into a fleeing Dralthi. A miracle of programming, design, vision and slick production.

14. CIVILIZATION

Developer: Microprose

Released: 1991

Reviewed: N/A

■ A majestic game and certainly the career highlight of both Sid Meier and Microprose alike. Choose from anyone of ten historical races and rise to power through research and warfare. With a detailed in-depth interface, Civilisation challenges Sim City as the "hour-draining" game of the millennium. Civilisation could easily be mistaken as the prequel to the awesome RTS Age of Empires.

13. SYSTEM SHOCK 2

Developer: Irrational Games/Looking Glass

Released: 1999

Reviewed: PCPP#42 98%

■ A Cyber-Punk thriller with action, strategy and RPG elements. A particularly difficult game to pigeon-hole, System Shock is perhaps the most comprehensive first person experience to date. A rare type of game that will dazzle your senses and scare you wit-less.

12. I-WAR

Developer: Particle Systems

Released: 1998

Reviewed: PCPP#21 89%

■ As enchanting as the Wing Commander universe is, I-War immediately lifted the space sim genre to new heights. Incorporating realistic physics for the first time in a space sim, I-War is the Falcon 4.0 of its genre. Fiendishly clever mission design and cut scenes to die for, plus the greatest intro ever. A breakthrough game in a genre that was stagnating badly.

11. GRAND PRIX 2

Developer: Geoff Crammond

Released: 1996

Reviewed: PCPP#1 9/10

■ Effortlessly playable and blessed with sufficient realism to convince purists, even four years down the track, Grand Prix 2 remains the only modern F1 sim worth playing. A fact made all the more astonishing when you realise it was developed (almost) entirely by one bloke. Geoff Crammond, PCPP salutes you!

DEVELOPER'S FAVES

PAUL STEED
(ID SOFTWARE)

Paul Steed is the Art Guy at id. He likes drawing chicks on rollerblades.

DOOM 1&2

WARCRAFT 2

COMMAND & CONQUER

HEXEN

DIABLO

"Doom and Doom 2 were very, very influential to me. I had been making games at Origin for 2 or 3 years at the time and my interest was waning doing long, drawn-out flight sims. When I played Doom (and especially Doom 2) my interest became renewed and I knew this was the career for me and (eventually) the type of game I wanted to be making. Kevin Cloud and Adrian Carmack became my new gods as their art more than anything else sucked me into the Doom universe. I still geek out here sometimes because of that."

GAME OF THE CENTURY

TOP 50 GAMES OF ALL TIME

10. THE LAST EXPRESS

Developer: Smoking Car

Released: 1997

Reviewed: PCPP#13 88%

■ "Cinematic" is a horribly overused term when it comes to describing games. Such is the paucity of gripping narratives, any game that steps beyond the generic immediately draws filmic comparisons. Yet if there is one game that truly deserves such a billing it would be *The Last Express*.

In 1997, Jordan Mechner crafted a sublime tale of deception, politics, intrigue and romance, set during the final journey taken by the Orient Express on the eve of World War I. With a memorable cast of characters, believable dialogue, utterly convincing voice acting, uniquely real-time gameplay, and deeply moving finale, *The Last Express* is an adventure game without peer.



10

The Last Express

9. HARPOON

Developer: 360 Pacific

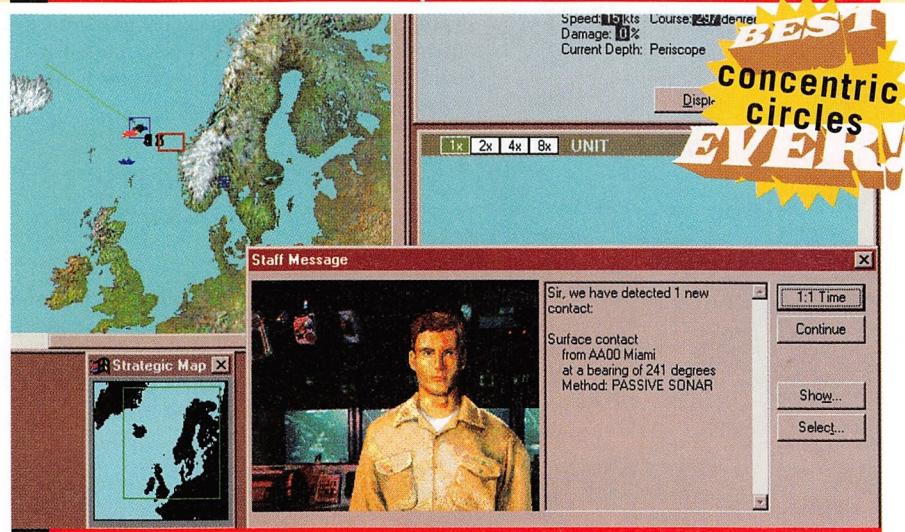
Released: 1988

Reviewed: N/A

■ The first RTS, *Harpoon*'s incredible complexity and focus on modern NATO vs. Warsaw Pact warfare put off many casual gamers, but online *Harpoon* still thrives with more user scenarios available than there are Quake levels.

Evolving through many versions and publishers, *Harpoon* is the oldest game in this list still being manufactured, sold, patched and supported. We choose to play the 'Harpoon Classic' version, which is effectively the very first version, but with a tweaked interface. Avoid *Harpoon II* at all costs.

Take on a Russia-held Greenland with a U.S Carrier Battle Group, then go nuts with nukes when it gets out of hand – magnificent!



9

Harpoon

8. ULTIMA UNDERWORLD – THE STYGIAN ABYSS

Developer: Origin/Looking Glass

Released: 1992

Reviewed: N/A

■ Role playing can be defined as an act where one person adopts the characteristics and particulars of another. *Ultima Underworld*, then, is the definitive fantasy role playing game. Years ahead of its time, *Underworld* is revered thanks to the decision to present a fantasy world from a first-person perspective, using a real-time 3D engine. Trivia buffs (and RPG elitists) might be surprised to know that it almost beat the infamous *Wolfenstein 3D* to the market!

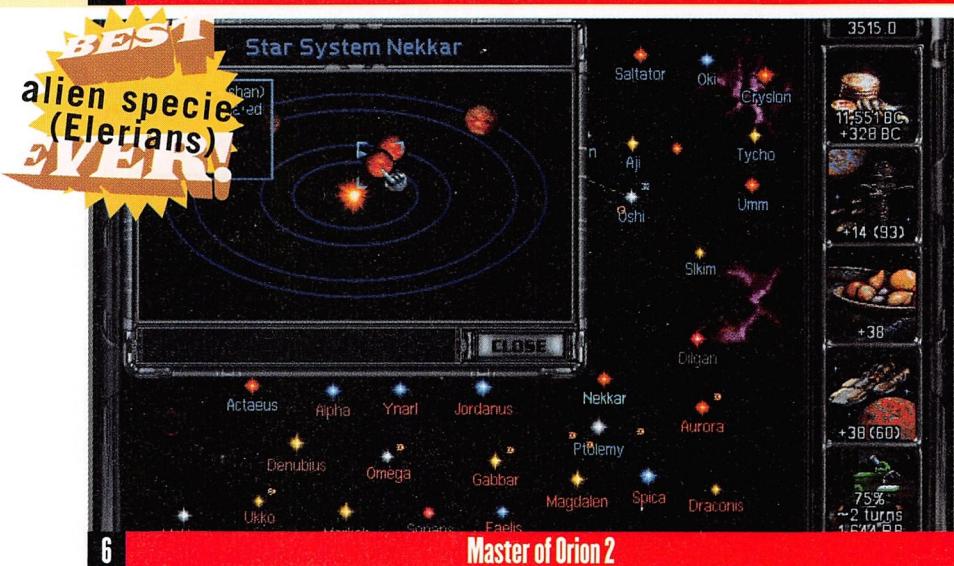
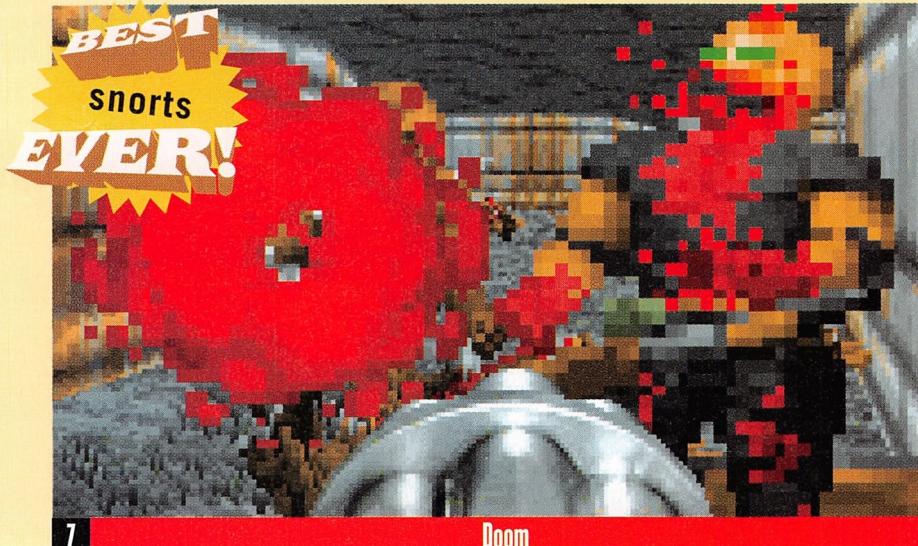
More importantly, *The Stygian Abyss* is an utterly convincing fantasy dungeon populated with a whole manner of characters and items to interact with. And being an *Ultima*, its story is priceless.



8

Ultima Underworld

10-5



7. DOOM

Developer: id Software

Released: 1994

Reviewed: N/A

■ Only one gaming company had the audacity to send you to hell and have you emerge the victor. Doom. Cast as a lone space marine, you traversed some of the most terrifying gaming environments ever devised in search of freedom. And if hordes of unnatural beasts got in the way, no matter - it was nothing that a shotgun pellet to the head couldn't solve. Doom also featured the first-person shooter's opus - the BFG 5000. And who can forget the glory of the chainsaw?

id's Doom is a true morbid masterpiece. The grunts and screams of death still haunt us to this day.

6. MASTER OF ORION 2

Developer: MicroProse

Released: 1996

Reviewed: PCPP#10 92%

■ How did the game that many deride as being merely "Civilization in space" end up so much higher than its traditionally chart-busting inspiration? Simple, it's a better game. MOO2 has all the empire building, scientific researching, conquering satisfaction of Civ, but with far greater opportunity for strategic variety. Every game is wildly different, forcing the player to frequently abandon favourite development paths in the face of a new threat. Particularly liked is the ability to design a completely custom ship, mixing the hundreds of technologies available to produce the ship for the job. This and to keep updating your fleet as the need arises. The greatest spreadsheet game ever.

5. GRAND PRIX LEGENDS

Developer: Papyrus

Released: 1998

Reviewed: PCPP#30 95%

■ Truly the most outstanding racing simulation to date. Responsible for this Holy Grail is, you guessed it, Papyrus - the lords of motor sport simulations. Qualities include: ground-breaking physics engine, gorgeous visuals, a true sense of speed, immaculate full-field deafening audio, immersive game play, tough scalable realistic AI. To top it all off, the originality of the sim (being set in the 1967 formula one world championship) deserves a heaping of praise. Papyrus set such a high standard with Grand Prix Legends, that they unknowingly set the benchmark on which all future titles from the racing genre will be judged.

GAME OF THE CENTURY

TOP 50 GAMES OF ALL TIME

4. FALCON 3.0

Developer: MicroProse

Released: 1992

Reviewed: N/A

■ Falcon 4.0 arrived to a world full of quality flight sims, and sick of most of them. Falcon 3.0, however, ruled and excited the world right up until the release of DiD's EF2000. A fantastic achievement for the time, Falcon 3.0's Electronic Battlefield featured a truly dynamic gameworld. While you flew a complete war waged around you. It felt like it too. Flying a Falcon 3.0 mission was as authentic as it got. It even utilised the 386's maths co-processor! Nothing else did... This game is responsible for creating a generation of war lovers, obsessed with all things military.



3. THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT

Developer: Looking Glass

Released: 1998

Reviewed: PCPP#33 95%

■ An action game where the most effective route to success is avoiding as much action as possible? Absolutely. With Thief, Looking Glass inverted the accepted action gaming paradigm, formulating a brilliant design that rewarded the player for concentrating upon stealth and cunning at the expense of gung-ho violence. Amid the myriad revolutionary features - foremost being the adoption of sound as a crucial axis of the gameplay - the telling masterstroke was to put that player in the role of a mere mortal. The resultant frightening degree of tension and at times unbearable suspense ensured Thief the mantle of the most immersive gaming experience yet seen.



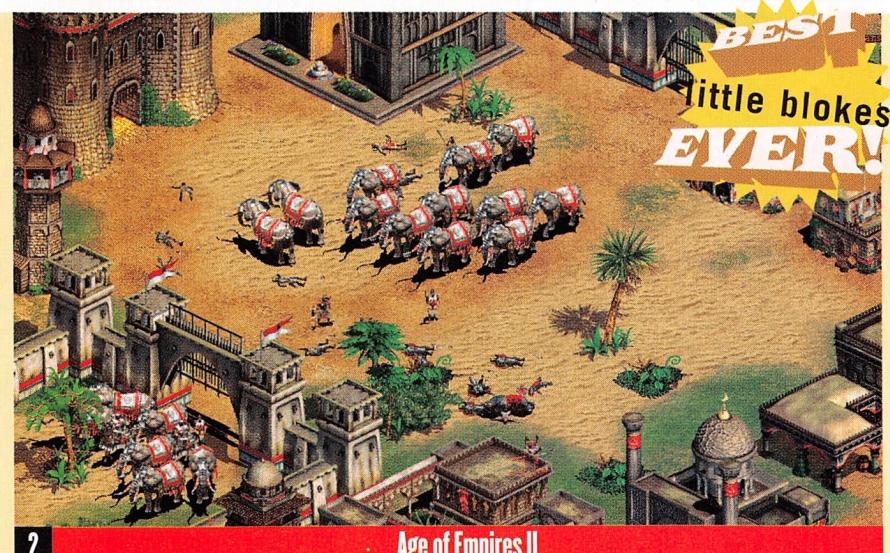
2. AGE OF EMPIRES II – THE AGE OF KINGS

Developer: Ensemble Studios

Released: 1999

Reviewed: PCPP#42 94%

■ Age Of Empires II: The Age of Kings is a near perfect example of the tried and tested RTS formula. Not only do you get to lead masses of little blokes from a whole manner of different cultural backgrounds into battle (and who can forget Ensemble's timeless flourish of having units respond in their native tongue?), you also get the satisfying depth of empire building and management. Age of Empires II simply plays like gold. It features the most gorgeous graphics seen in RTS gaming, as well as some truly engaging single player campaigns – all based upon real historical events.



1. QUAKE

Developer: id software

Released: 1996

Reviewed: PCPP#6 92%

■ This shouldn't come as much of a surprise. After all, Quake is undoubtedly such a landmark title - the first ever FPS that incorporated a true, free-flowing 3D engine, stable internet code and technology, beautifully animated polygonal monsters and brilliant architecture. Quake was an artistic and technological masterpiece - a seamless sample of simplified weaponry in a "you versus-the-hordes-of-hell" scenario. Quake didn't beat around the bush - it was a hardcore action shooter set up in a basic scenario - and it worked. Quake is still played vigorously and maintains a huge loyal following today.

The singleplayer was bound through the devilishly scary world id had generated. A

centre of morbid gothic horror, mood sodden lighting, underground organic sounds and a sparse array of nightmarish monsters with seemingly unique personalities simulated an environment that was felt almost too real.

The crafty level creation allowed for the perfect jump-out-of-your-chair placement of Quake's creatures: Scags perched high in the darkness hissed at your presence, Fiends fenced around frantically while attempting to engage in melee combat. The Spawn was both deadly alive and in death, the Vore was Quake's token chick from Hell and the discerning moan of a zombie made seasoned first-person players shift with a terrible sense of unease. This was partly due to the convincing way that each enemy felt, for all intents and purposes, alive. You were bombarded from all directions - forward,

behind, up and down. Paranoia was a constant bedfellow.

Through the talent of a small team (id software) and the vision of one man (John Carmack), Quake spawned countless communities that mutated Quake every which way imaginable in the form of mods. The Quake game engine is also the driving force behind many of today's industry giants like Half-Life and Team Fortress 2. Not only did Quake have the most powerful engine in the race, it saw the birth of stable internet technologies which allowed up to 15 players to battle it out across the internet. With Quake, id software found a new niche in the gaming market. The flexibility of the engine and the hype Quake generated shaped almost every conceivable shooter and globalised action gaming by moulding the template for future titles to follow.



WIN QUAKE STUFF!

So, you think you got all the Quiz answers? If so write to us at

QUIZ ANSWERS

Level 6, 418a Elizabeth St

Surry Hills, 2010, NSW

and you could win a

- A Quake 2 poster signed by the id crew
- A special edition boxed version of Quake 3 Arena

*PREVIEWS

DIABLO II

The devil's second coming draws near...

DETAILS

- **Genre:** Action/RPG
- **Players:** 1-8
- **Developer:** Blizzard
- **Publisher:** Sierra
- **Due:** 1st Qtr 2000

* Diablo's release in late '96 reinforced Blizzard's reputation as a company that consistently produced quality titles. Its successful hybridisation of the Action and RPG genres, in effect, brought the RPG to the masses. This, in turn, paved the way for increased public acceptance of more hardcore titles like Baldur's Gate. It is now three years later, and few titles in the intervening years have eclipsed Diablo's popularity. Countless gamers the world over have waited with bated breath for the release of its sequel. That time is almost at hand, and Diablo II is set to once again entrance and intrigue newcomers and veterans alike.

Counter-repetitive

In addition to introducing a number of exciting new

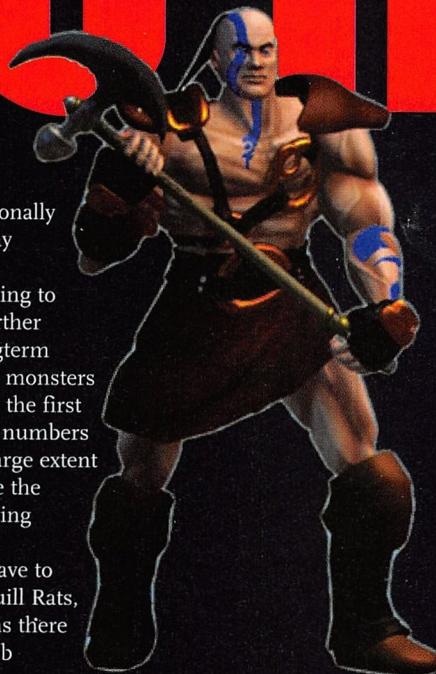
innovations, Diablo II will feature several major improvements. Though it is, by all accounts, a fantastic game, Diablo has been subject to several valid criticisms. Primary amongst these is its inherent simplicity. For many, Diablo felt repetitive and became tedious too quickly, making its longterm value somewhat questionable. Bill Roper, the Producer of Diablo II, is eager to reinforce the fact that this criticism has been duly addressed, along with several others. "While we recognised that [repetitiveness] was a big issue, we really felt that it was less of a gameplay issue, and much more of a perception issue, in that we certainly didn't do a great job of integrating the plot into the game. Without the story line driving the gameplay, it did tend to start feeling very repetitive. In Diablo II we've worked hard on ensuring that the environments are varied, and on monster diversity and AI. We've also worked very, very hard to make the story line an integral part of the game, so that the player's actions have a discernible effect on the game world and the plot," asserts Bill.

It's huuuge!

The size of Diablo II has drastically increased in comparison to its precursor. "Diablo II is a good six or seven times as large in area," explains Bill. "In gameplay terms, it is much, much bigger. There are huge, expansive wildernesses and within these areas are hundreds of locations that you can visit. These include monasteries, temples, caves, tombs, towers and subterranean passageways. For first time players, we estimate that it will take them between forty and sixty hours to complete the game."

This increase in scope also extends to the number of enemy species within the game. Diablo

II will feature a proportionally greater number of enemy species, and equal intra-species diversity. According to Bill, this will serve to further increase the game's longterm value. "We've kept a few monsters that we really liked from the first game, but there are vast numbers of new monsters. To a large extent the environments dictate the type of monsters inhabiting particular areas. In lush, pastoral regions you'll have to deal with Wolves and Quill Rats, and in arid desert regions there are Mummies and Scarab



Tarak's Mystical Vial of Goblin Repellant +2 didn't seem to work.

Prumpy's Barnet of Pubic Extravagence +6 proved a hit in the catacombs.



While her companions burned to death, Sula took up juggling.

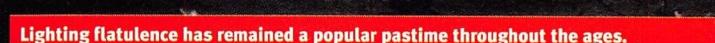


Illian's Trident of Polite Derision +4 surprised many with its effectiveness - most of all Illian.



Godric's Sword of Prolonged Discomfort +3 put him at a distinct disadvantage.

Lighting flatulence has remained a popular pastime throughout the ages.



*PREVIEWS



Beetles to fight. There is also a lot of variation within each species, with four or more different types of each creature".

Another less than positive attribute of the original Diablo was its annoying and disruptive loading between levels. One of Blizzard's primary focuses in creating Diablo II is completely eliminating loading times. "We've used a technique called Dynamic Loading which dumps level

information that is no longer needed, and loads information for upcoming areas as you approach them," says Bill. "When you

enter caves and temples, the loading is almost instantaneous. There's sometimes a half-second pause as data is copied from the CD, but you don't really notice it. It's amazing how much

bigger it makes the world feel, and how much smoother the gameplay really comes across."

Battle.net II

While Blizzard are focussing heavily on Diablo II's single player experience, a lot of manpower is being devoted to a refinement of Battle.net. At the time, Battle.net was one of the most ambitious and effective multiplayer systems in existence. Today, it stands alone as an online gaming industry benchmark. Unlike certain prominent developers, Blizzard saw fit to provide Australia with a Battle.net server. In a country often abandoned by companies as a



Ragnar's Burning Ring of Gastric Distress +7 cleared the campsite in no time.



A horde of ghastly demon-spawn looking for the nightly Bingo meet.

"...there are vast numbers of new monsters..."

consequence of its small population, such support was unheard of, and was gratefully received by thousands of multiplayer starved gamers. Bill assures us that Australian players can expect an even greater level of support with the release of Diablo II. "Our internet strategy with Battle.net is constantly expanding. We've re-evaluated the partners we're working with and technologies that are currently available, which weren't available when Battle.net was first launched. With that in mind, our Battle.net team is working to provide the best possible play experience worldwide."

Death to cheats!

Unfortunately, the joy of multiplayer Diablo was relatively short lived, as the use of character stat-bolstering trainers, and cheat programs enabling town killing, ran rampant. Item dueling rendered gold and extremely rare items valueless commodities, and it was not uncommon to meet newbies using Level 40 characters decked out in Godly Armour of the Whale. According to Bill, Blizzard also hopes to completely eliminate the problems that plagued multiplayer Diablo. "Among numerous measures we're taking to ensure that the same thing doesn't happen



with Diablo II, we're going to be using a client/server model for character data storage on Battle.net. What we're hoping to accomplish is an environment where character data can't be altered using hacks and trainers. That way, players in possession of rare items can't make copies of them, and players who wish to buy those items can't manufacture phenomenal quantities of gold. Ultimately, we hope to have a persistent economy, where gold and rare items consistently retain their value."

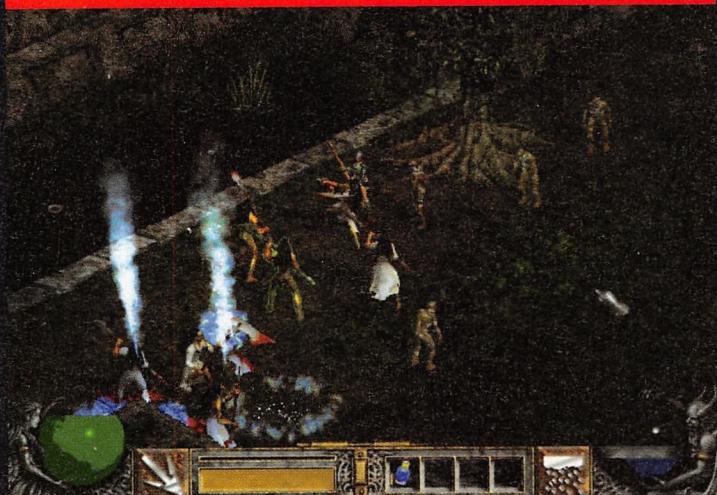
Priceless items

A random generation system in both single player and multiplayer games will see the emergence of some incredibly rare and unique items. Bill

predicts that this feature will contribute immeasurably to Diablo II's popularity. "A player may find him or herself in possession of an item so rare that only three or four others on all of Battle.net will have one. Other players will see them carrying or wearing it, and immediately recognise that item for what it is. These virtually priceless items will fetch phenomenal quantities of gold, but most players probably won't want to sell them," he reasons.

As to whether he anticipates such items appearing for sale on online auction sites like

And these zombies simply wanted to tend to the gardening in peace.



eBay, he says, laughing. "It's impossible to gauge the public's reactions and intentions with that sort of thing, though it would certainly be a sign of the times."

Guild support

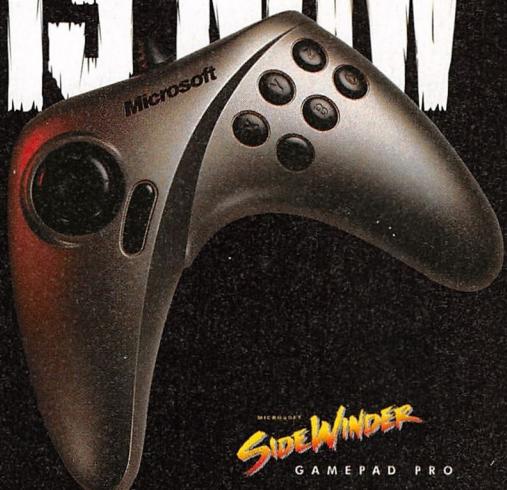
Diablo II will introduce a particularly interesting Battle.net feature - Guild Houses. These will be represented by private channels within Battle.net's chat area, and will provide an additional way for players to be identified. While the exact method of identification is

still being decided, it could be something as simple as a tag next to their name, or an artefact that all members possess. Guild Houses will also grant functionality not normally available in regular Battle.net sessions of the game, like the ability to store items.

Diablo II will soon be entering the beta phase, and will be tested extensively by members of the public. Further coverage will follow once we receive beta code.

Brett Robinson

**HEAD-HIGH TACKLING, TRIPPING
AND BRAWLING IS NOW
TOTALLY PC.**



With the new SideWinder Game Pad Pro, you can be guaranteed a hard hitting game. With both proportional and digital control you can have the fastest response combined with perfect precision handling - making every match one to remember. www.microsoft.com/sidewinder/

© 1999 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft and SideWinder are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries.

*PREVIEWS

FINAL FANTASY VIII

The epic Japanese RPG series returns to the PC.

DETAILS

- **Genre:** RPG
- **Players:** 1
- **Developer:** Square/Eidos
- **Publisher:** EA
- **Due:** 2nd Qtr 2000

* Console to PC conversions have been something of a hit and miss affair of late. The Playstation version of Final Fantasy VII was a true masterpiece of involving gameplay and gorgeous visuals. Markedly less spectacular was its PC counterpart: a lazy conversion lacking significant graphical tweaks and interface refinements. In producing a PC version of Final Fantasy VIII, Square have demonstrated a grim determination not to make the same mistake again.

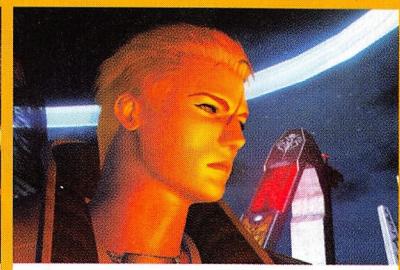
Squall, Seifer and Selphie

In keeping with the Final Fantasy tradition, this eighth incarnation features an entirely new plot. Old favourites like Biggs and Wedge make an appearance, but for the most part the game's characters are also new. The plot centres on Squall Leonheart, an abrasive and arrogant young man who's not nearly as cute or likeable as FFVII's Cloud. Squall is a student of Garden, a mercenary school. His immediate goal is to become a member of Garden's elite mercenary force, SeeD. The driving force behind his ambition

We love the way the background is out of focus. A simple technique, but highly effective.



Rinoa - Squall's love interest. She's pretty.

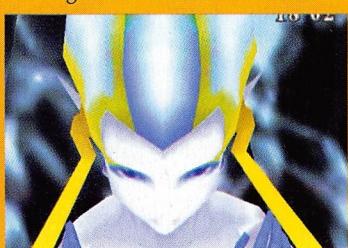


Seifer - Squall's arch rival. He's angry.

Hi-res FF

In terms of story line and gameplay, there is little variation between the PC and Playstation versions. However, the PC version's graphics have been enhanced significantly. The 320x240 resolution background textures that tarnished FFVII have been replaced by new, higher resolution images in FFVIII. The characters also appear much crisper and more lifelike, thanks to support for 3D accelerators. In-game FMV sequences are now full-

screen, adding to their optical impact. Fans of FFVII will immediately notice the new way in which characters are portrayed in FFVIII. Square have done away with the classic super-deformed character designs, replacing them with far more realistic and much less angular representations. Also, the continuity in character appearance makes the transitions between adventure and battle sequences far less jarring than in the previous game, and much more appealing on the whole.



Four of the sixteen summonable Guardian Forces (left to right) Shiva, Siren, Diablos and Ifrit

VIII



Spells at twenty paces

Draw magic

In FFVIII, more radical gameplay changes have been implemented. Gone is the Materia system of FFVII, replaced with the new Junction System. Instead of being acquired through Materia, spells are now drawn from opponents and specific points within the game world. The spells can then be used immediately, or stored away for later use. More common spells can be used an infinite number of times, while extremely powerful spells are sometimes extremely limited in the number of times they can be



Squall
"I'm Squall, the squad leader.
There's 2 others with me."



Our hero Squall in his room

cast during the game. These spells must then be saved for use against particularly challenging opponents.

Triple Triad

The mini games, one of the highlights of FFVII, have been replaced with an incredibly addictive Magic: The Gathering-esque card game called Triple Triad. With 140 cards to collect, Triple Triad has sparked a craze amongst the Playstation community to rival Pokemon. The game is played, in various incarnations, by NPCs throughout the game world.



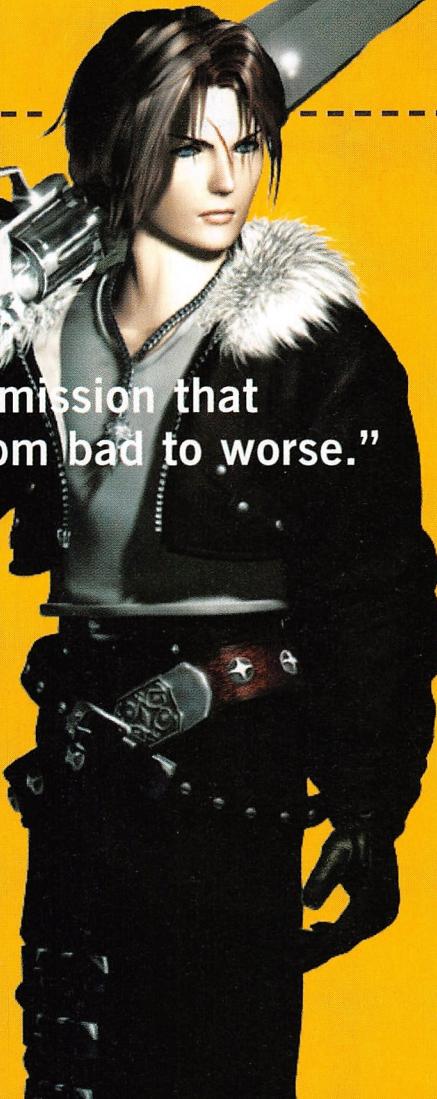
"...a harrowing mission that quickly turns from bad to worse."

Cards are awarded after defeating powerful opponents in battle, and by winning Triple Triad matches. Guardian Forces are also capable of transforming opponents on the verge of death into cards.

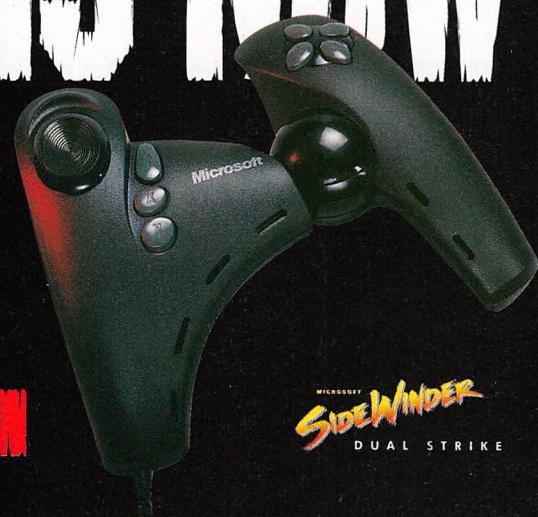
Visually stunning

One of FFVIII biggest drawcards is its spectacular visuals. Guardian Force attacks and magic spells are simply breathtaking, and the intro is one of the most incredible ever seen. With several months to go, it may be difficult for those who also own Playstations to wait for the PC version's release. However, we're certain it'll be worth the wait.

Brett Robinson



HUNTING, SHOOTING AND DESTROYING IS NOW
TOTALLY PC!



MICROSOFT
SIDEWINDER
DUAL STRIKE



The new SideWinder Dual Strike will satisfy your appetite for fragging. Now you can perform complex lethal moves like circle strafing while still shooting. It combines the control of a mouse with the agility of a gamepad. You're not just holding the controls. You're holding a grudge. www.microsoft.com/sidewinder/

© 1999 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft and SideWinder are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries.

*PREVIEWS

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2

The most definitive rally sim to date?



DETAILS

- Genre: Rally Sim
- Players: 1-8
- Developer: Codemasters
- Publisher: Eidos
- Due: 2nd Qtr 2000

***** In the year since its release, Colin McRae Rally's standing as the best rally based driving game on PC, and one of the best driving games in existence, has remained relatively unassailed. Only in the past few months have any developers dared to take on the mighty Codemasters in an effort to beat them at their own game. At present, more than four competing games are undergoing development, challenging Colin McRae Rally for the rally gaming crown.

However, Codemasters aren't resting on their laurels, basking in the praise for their award-winning racing title. On the contrary, they're feverishly developing a sequel. And if what we've seen so far is any indication of the quality of the final product, Codies may once again take up the premier position atop the rally gaming podium.

Through rain, sleet and snow, the little Scottish fella just keeps going and going. Onya Colin!

Ford Focus

The development team are going all out in an effort to accurately simulate every aspect of rally driving. Team members recently travelled to Barcelona where they put the car driven by Colin McRae, the Ford Focus, through its paces. The Focus has been designed as a rally car from the ground up, with the short wheelbase providing significant handling and stability benefits. Colin's current ranking of fifth in the World Rally Championship establishes the Focus as a force to be reckoned with. All of the WRC manufacturers have provided design specifications and telemetry data on their respective models, with the cars' dimensions accurately measured using lasers.

The development team have also recorded engine audio from outside

and inside each car, and Colin McRae's co-driver, Nicky Grist, will once again keep the player apprised of the conditions ahead.

Hood and bonnet sim

Within the game, the car models are more crisply defined with markedly higher polygon counts. New wheel spin code and the addition of independent four-wheel suspension results in even more realistic handling. A new, more accurate, damage system has also been implemented. Damaged body panels now hang off the car, scraping the track surface until they break off. And severe damage to the front of each car can result in the bonnet popping open, obscuring the player's view and putting them out of contention. Similarly, damage to the rear of the car can cause the boot to pop open, adversely affecting the

car's aerodynamics.

A new weather system is also being created, with lightning during thunderstorms proving to be a real distraction to the player. The developers are currently deliberating on whether to make the weather system dynamic. Doing so would see a dry, dusty track turn slippery and muddy with the mid-race onset of rain. This extreme realism would be most welcome, but may not be included should it be deemed unfeasible. Fingers crossed on that one.

Rally soon

With Codemasters anticipating completion of the game in the second quarter of 2000, rallying nirvana is still a while off. But until then, we're counting the days.

Brett Robinson

GRAND PRIX WORLD

DETAILS

- **Genre:** F1 Management Sim
- **Players:** 1-4
- **Developer:** Microprose
- **Publisher:** Hasbro Interactive
- **Due:** 1st Qtr 2000

* The follow-up title to Grand Prix Manager and Grand Prix Manager II, Grand Prix World - in this early version at least - appears a tad underwhelming. It seems that gone are the features which made the previous versions so popular, being instead replaced with some bold new design "enhancements".

The interface - which now sports a much more modern design - fails to capture that exciting "I manage an F1 team!" feel. Instead, it looks more like the engine controls of a Star Trek vessel. Most of the options from the previous versions are still there however: sponsors, staff management, merchandising, car development, car setup, driver strategy, etc.

A matter of complete curiosity is the completely re-worked "at the track" design. Past titles saw a full track over-head view with little car-like icons making their way around the circuit. However, in Grand Prix World, we now see four windows which can be modified to display a track map (with much less character), various TV style perspectives (which are of little use), or the standard time and position information.

Set for release sometime in the new year, Grand Prix World doesn't exactly inspire confidence at this late stage of development. With a few injections of character and a little of that tasty flavour from previous efforts, Grand Prix World could be a winner.

Edward Fox.

(bottom left) Damon Hill in first place?
Ah-ha-ha-ha!



SPEEDING, RACING AND RAMMING IS NOW TOTALLY PC.



With more features than you could poke a gear stick at, the SideWinder Precision Racing Wheel is designed especially for precision handling and performance that racing fanatics demand. Fine-tune the set up of your wheel to your own disturbing needs and drive yourself insane. www.microsoft.com/sidewinder/

© 1999 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft and SideWinder are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries.

MICROSOFT
SIDEWINDER
PRECISION RACING WHEEL

*PREVIEWS

THE SIMS

It's not all two cars, two kids and a white picket fence, you know.

DETAILS

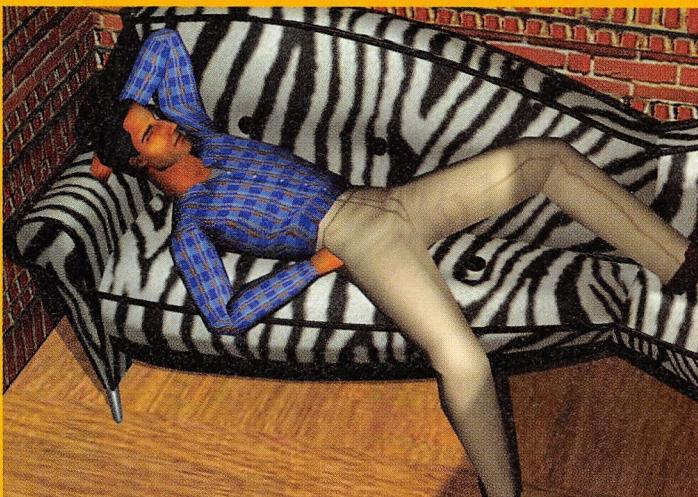
- **Genre:** Housekeeping
- **Players:** 1
- **Developer:** Maxis
- **Publisher:** EA
- **Due:** 1st Qtr 2000

***** Some game designers seem to equate the scale of their game to the ambition of the project, as if a vast the game world - "Look, you can travel from one end of the universe to the other!" - automatically confers a degree of superiority. Will Wright is not one such game designer. After simulating everything from ants, farms, and towns to cities, earth and life itself, he's now decided to sim a house. That's right, just one, tiny, insignificant house. Ironically, it will be his most complex, sophisticated and - yes - ambitious title yet.

Getting all emotional

The Sims, as your little computer people are called,

Rick proudly displays his juicy burger, while foxy Moesha eagerly awaits his next move.



Play pocket billiards while laying on a dead zebra.



operates on a far more intimate level than any other Maxis game. Previous Sim titles have all tended to situate the player at a distance from the virtual world under simulation, perhaps resulting in a lack of emotional attachment to proceedings. "It's the most personal, most familiar thing we can simulate," says Will. "And it's rather odd and humorous. I've always wanted a game that I could put myself into and simulate my life."

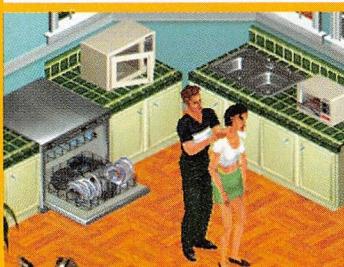
So The Sims can be viewed as a deliberate reaction against the more abstract and detached experience found in SimEarth or even SimCity? "Yes, as we zoom



in closer I think we tend to identify more and more with what we're seeing," Will reasons. "I'm also finding that the narratives that people build as they play and interpret the game are much stronger and more interesting."

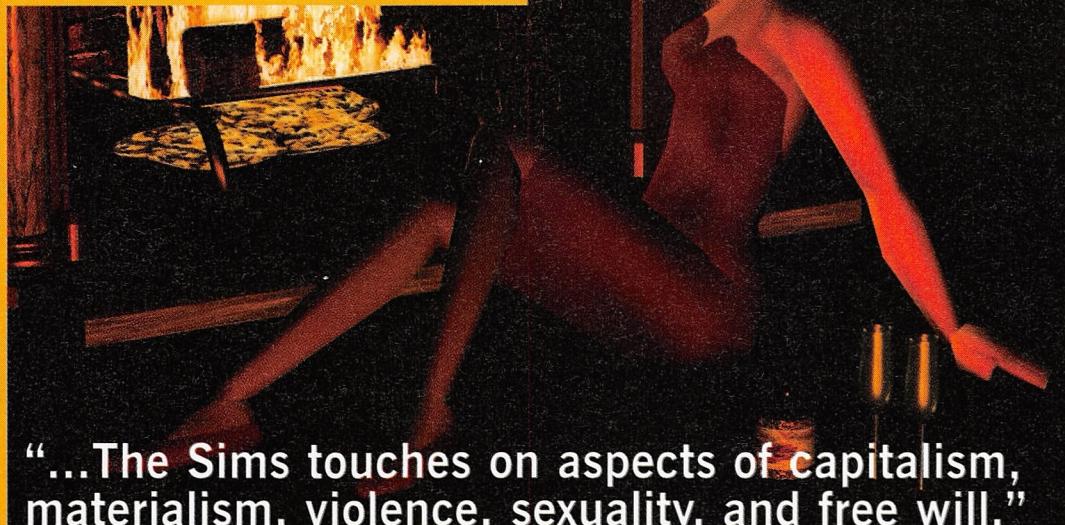
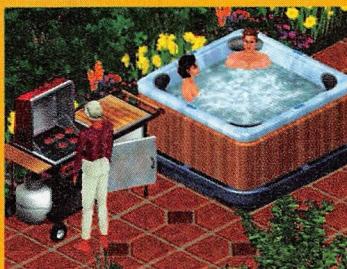
Backed up toilets

Such narratives are conveyed through a game structure that isn't, you'll be pleased to hear, real-time. Indeed, it takes fifteen minutes to play out one day - which translates into about 90 hours to complete just one year. Thus, the entire lifespan of your sims isn't simulated, rather a small portion of that existence.





Is this a computer game or a tampon ad?



"...The Sims touches on aspects of capitalism, materialism, violence, sexuality, and free will."

Foremost in the game's design was that it shouldn't be about your sims getting old, but instead more about the evolution of their lifestyle. According to Will, "Most games - well, the easiest ones - start with a single adult moving into the neighbourhood with no job and no friends. It's up to you to get them a job and then advance in that career, and friends by meeting neighbours, having parties, etc. If you do well in the job you will be promoted, earn more money and can build a bigger house with more cool stuff like hot tubs, pool, gymnasium, media room, for example. If you do well with your friends you

might fall in love and eventually decide to get married and start a family. Needless to say, along the way many things come up that can thwart your sims in their pursuit of happiness - disasters, fights, burglaries, backed up toilets, dead fish in the aquarium!"

Virtual ideology

It isn't all voracious consumerism, though - something the developers have been keen to avoid. The Maxis team have had many an interesting discussion concerning the ideology within the game. Will agrees that The Sims touches on aspects of

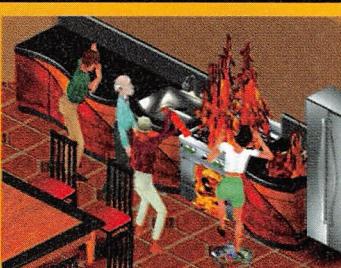
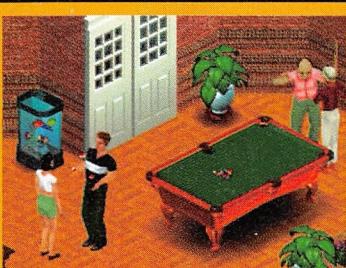
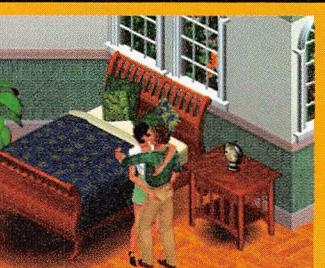
capitalism, materialism, violence, sexuality, and free will, and he's well aware of the danger in prescribing a certain value system:

"Many people initially see this game as having a very materialistic slant - he who dies with the most toys wins. In fact we intended that, it's a red-herring of sorts in the game. The players that go for the goods at the expense of all else will eventually find themselves friendless, destitute and crushed under loads of debt as all their objects begin to run-down, break, wear-out, leak, etc. There are crucial balances to be struck between material/social, work/family, and chores/leisure."

That is the real essence of this game."

As a result, play is set to be refreshingly open-ended, with a lack of predefined goals or objectives allowing the player to enjoy great freedom in conducting social experiments. Basically, you should be able to do whatever you want, within reason of course. The real test, though, would be whether you could make the lives of your sims eternally blissful by buying them a PC and a copy of The Sims. Modesty prevented Will from answering this question truthfully, so we'll have to wait until early next year to find out.

David Wildgoose

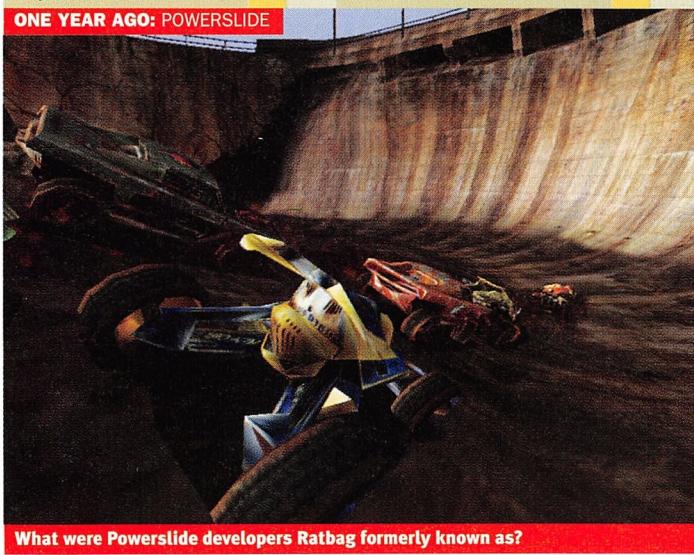


SCORE LIST

The List continues to expand - only two screenshots left!

GAME	SCORE	ISSUE	GAME	SCORE	ISSUE	GAME	SCORE	ISSUE
101st Airborne	71	#33	Army Men 2	79	#38	Braveheart	86	#42
3D Mini Golf	80	#14	Asghan	43	#37	Breakneck	86	#39
3D Ultra Mini Golf Deluxe	60	#30	Assassin 2015	55	#8	Bridge Deluxe 2	85	#4
3D Ultra Pinball	77	#21	Assault Rigs	50	#1	Broken Sword	89	#6
3rd Reich	82	#12	Asteroids	74	#33	Broken Sword 2	80	#19
688: Nuclear Sub	90	#16	ATF Gold	86	#13	Bud Tucker	70	#3
7th Legion	53	#19	Atlantis	73	#17	Bug	53	#9
A-10 Cuba!	65	#11	Atmosphere	55	#2	Buggy	62	#33
Abe's Exodus	86	#32	Atomic Bomberman	72	#16	Burnout Drag Racing: PC	70	#35
Abe's Oddysee	90	#18	Australian Cricket Captain	86	#36	C&C for Win 95	80	#14
Abuse	25	#2	Azrael's Tear	80	#8	C&C Sole Survivor	28	#23
Acclaim's D	80	#1	Babe Ruth Baseball	60	#17	C&C: Red Alert	97	#8
Achtung Spitfire	80	#22	Back to Baghdad	75	#5	C&C Red Alert: Counterstrike	69	#13
Actua Golf 2	73	#23	Bad Day on the Midway	70	#2	C&C Red Alert: The Aftermath	70	#19
Actua Soccer	54	#16	Bad Mojo: the Roach Game	82	#2	C&C Tiberian Sun	94	#41
Actua Tennis	84	#32	Baku Baku	89	#7	Caesar III	88	#31
Addiction Pinball	90	#27	Baldur's Gate	87	#35	Caesar's Palace	75	#21
Adrenix	72	#29	BG: Sword Coast	76	#41	Callahan's Crosstime Saloon	80	#14
AFL	62	#10	Balls Of Steel	89	#23	Capitalism	40	#2
AFL 98	94	#19	Bass Masters Classic	76	#28	Carmageddon	90	#15
AFL 99	90	#34	Battle at Ardennes	86	#17	Carmageddon 2	92	#33
Afterlife	81	#5	Battle Cruiser 3000AD	78	#12	Cart: Precision Racing	84	#19
Age of Empires	93	#17	Battle of Britain	62	#38	Castrol Honda Superbikes	89	#26
AOE: Rise of Rome	90	#33	Battleground 8: Waterloo	78	#22	Castrol Superbikes 2000	85	#42
Age of Empires 2	94	#42	Battleground Antietam	83	#11	Cave Wars	72	#12
Age of Sail	79	#13	Battleground Ardennes	67	#2	Championship Manager 2	78	#10
Agent Armstrong	68	#16	Battleground Bull Run	75	#15	Championship Manager 3	85	#38
AH-64 Flashpoint Korea	92	#11	Battleground Napoleon	75	#15	Chaos Overlords	64	#3
AH-64D Longbow	86	#3	Battleground Shiloh	84	#6	Chasm: The Rift	60	#19
Air Warrior II	73	#12	Battleground Waterloo	67	#4	Chess Master 4000 Turbo	86	#3
Air Warrior III	92	#22	Battleship	71	#15	Chess Wars	70	#15
AI Unser Jr Arcade Racing	40	#3	Battlespire	54	#30	Chronicles of the Sword	48	#3
Albion	70	#8	Battlezone	90	#22	City of Lost Children	74	#12
Alien Earth	54	#27	Beast Wars	43	#26	Civ 2 Fantastic Worlds	68	#21
Alien Incident	68	#6	Beasts and Bumpkins	92	#18	Civ 2: Multiplayer + classic	90	#28
Alien Trilogy	51	#10	Beat The House 2	76	#23	Civilization: Call To Power	96	#36
Alien Virus	69	#5	Beavis and Butthead	68	#36	Civ: Test of Time	81	#41
Aliens vs. Predator	96	#37	Bedlam	68	#8	Civil War	84	#8
Alpha Centauri	96	#36	Betrayal at Antara	71	#16	Civil War 2: Generals	81	#22
Amerzone	68	#42	Beyond Time	50	#30	Civilization 2	90	#1
American Civil War	53	#5	Big Hurt Baseball	79	#5	Clans	48	#42
Amok	79	#8	Big Race Pinball	90	#33	Claw	62	#26
Anastasia	20	#27	Big Red Racing	67	#2	Close Combat	72	#5
Ancient Conquest	79	#35	Bio Freaks	72	#28	Close Combat 2	90	#18
Ancient Evil	72	#26	Birthright	79	#17	Close Combat 3	88	#35
Andretti Racing	77	#21	Black Dahlia	82	#24	Cluedo	71	#34
ANNO 1602	71	#40	Blackstone Chronicles	75	#37	Clyde's Revenge	69	#6
Apache Havoc	84	#34	Blade Runner	96	#19	Colin McRae Rally	94	#30
Apache Longbow Gold	92	#13	Blood	71	#14	Comanche 3	80	#14
Arc of Time	75	#11	Blood 2	72	#34	Comanche Gold	85	#27
Archimedean Dynasty	90	#9	Blood and Magic	86	#9	Combat Chess	70	#20
ARL Rugby League 96	88	#4	Blood Plasma	55	#21	Commandos	82	#28
Armor Command	86	#25	Blue Ice	77	#10	Commandos: Call of Duty	83	#38
Armoured Fist 2	82	#20	Boss Rally	5	#39	Complete Carriers at War	61	#2
Army Men	85	#29	Brainstorm	43	#9	Conquest of the New World	71	#2

ONE YEAR AGO: POWERSLIDE



What were Powerslide developers Ratbag formerly known as?

GOLD: Games scoring 90-94%
PLATINUM: Games scoring 95-100%
GAME
SCORE ISSUE

F22 ADF: Red Sea	85	#27
F22 Lightning 3	85	#40
FA/18 E Carrier Strike Fighter	68	#30
FA Prem. League Stars	71	#42
Fable	46	#10
Falcon 4.0	98	#33
Fallen Haven	71	#13
Fallout	89	#18
Fallout 2	88	#32
Fantasy General	82	#2
Fatal Abyss	54	#33
Fields of Fire	53	#29
FIFA 97	69	#10
FIFA 98	95	#20
FIFA 99	92	#32
FIFA Soccer Manager	71	#16
Fighter Pilot	71	#32
Fighter Squadron	85	#37
Fighting Force	70	#23
Fighting Steel	80	#41
Final Conflict	20	#24
Final Doom	82	#6
Final Fantasy VII	90	#27
Firefight	82	#5
Fleet Command	89	#39
Flight Unlimited II	89	#22
Flight Unlimited III	89	#43
Flipout	73	#14
Fly!	85	#42
Flying Corps	76	#11
Flying Corps Gold	74	#20
Forbidden City	74	#32
Force 21	90	#42
Fork in the Tale	58	#13
Formula 1 3Dfx	77	#12
Formula Karts	84	#19
Forsaken	93	#25
FPS: Skiing	63	#24
Fragile Allegiance	85	#10
Front Page Sports Golf	77	#18
Full Court Press	82	#7
G-Nome	80	#15
G-Police	92	#18
Galapagos	77	#19
Gangsters	85	#34
Gender Wars	72	#4
Gene Wars	86	#8
Get Medieval	61	#30
Gettysburg	80	#1
Gex	80	#7
Gex 2: Enter the Gecko	87	#28
Global Domination	63	#32
Golf Pro 2000	65	#12
Goosebumps	79	#10
GP 500	96	#43
Grand Prix 2	90	#1
Grand Prix Legends	95	#30
Grand Theft Auto	65	#18
GTA London	75	#38
Grand Touring	60	#35
Great Battles of Alexander	80	#17
Great Battles of Hannibal	62	#23
Grim Fandango	91	#31
Gruntz	45	#37
Guardians of Darkness	30	#41
Half Life	98	#31
Hang Time	79	#11
Hard War	59	#29
Harpoon 97	90	#10
Heart of Darkness	89	#27
Heaven's Dawn	25	#6
Heavy Gear	91	#20
Heavy Gear II	93	#40
Hedz	69	#32
Helicops	79	#15
Hell Bender	54	#7
Heretic	50	#3

ONE YEAR AGO: FALLOUT 2

What does MIRV stand for?

Lords of the Realms 2:Siege	79	#16	Motorhead	83	#26
Luftwaffe Command	68	#35	MS Flight Sim v6	83	#10
Lunatics	61	#14	MS Football	36	#10
M.A.X. 2	81	#30	MS Pinball Arcade	86	#34
M1 Tank Platoon	91	#25	Mummy	65	#10
M1A2 Abrams	80	#13	Muppet Treasure Island	62	#5
Madden 98	81	#20	Myth 2	91	#35
Madden NFL 97	84	#8	Myth: The Fallen Lords	93	#20
Madden NFL 99	88	#32	Nascar 2	76	#11
Machines	90	#38	Nascar Road Racing	28	#41
Mage Slayer	64	#20	Nascar Truck	80	#38
Magic the Gathering: Spec. Ed	69	#25	NBA Action 98	85	#23
Magic: The Gather-MicroProse	91	#12	NBA JAM	39	#14
MTG: Spells of Ancients	70	#21	NBA Live 98	88	#20
Magic: The Gathering-Acclaim	71	#12	NBA Live 99	86	#31
Man of War	71	#18	NCAA Final Four '97	74	#12
Man of War II	15	#40	Necrodome	70	#10
Manx TT	44	#23	Need For Speed 2	90	#13
Mass Destruction	78	#17	Need for Speed 2 SE	80	#21
Master of Dimension	71	#9	Need for Speed 3	79	#28
Master Levels for Doom 2	30	#1	Need for Speed: High Stakes	89	#41
Master of Orion 2	92	#10	Need for Speed SE	56	#5
Mastermind	71	#26	Netmech	60	#6
Maximum Roadrage	32	#6	Netstorm	85	#20
MDK	83	#12	Newman Haas Racing	70	#33
Meat Puppets	71	#16	NHL 98	90	#19
Mech Commander	86	#27	NHL 99	73	#31
Mechwarrior 2: Mercenaries	85	#7	NHRA Drag Racing	68	#32
Mechwarrior 2: Titanium	86	#26	Nightlong	79	#31
Mechwarrior 3	91	#39	Nightmare Creatures	79	#27
Mega Race 2	69	#7	Nine	84	#9
Metal Storm	25	#10	Noir	61	#12
MIA	65	#34	Normality	78	#4
MIB	78	#20	Norse by Northwest	72	#12
Micro Machines v3	80	#29	North vs. South	67	#37
Microsoft Combat Flight Sim	89	#33	Novalogic F16 + MiG 29	90	#32
Microsoft Golf 99	80	#36	Nuclear Strike	85	#20
Mig Alley	92	#42	Obsidian	81	#15
Might & Magic VI	91	#26	Of Light and Darkness	60	#26
Might & Magic VII	70	#40	Offensive	35	#4
Mike Stewart's Bodyboarding	34	#40	Olympic Games 1996	44	#6
Mimi and the Mites	78	#6	Onside	35	#4
Monaco Grand Prix	74	#32	Operation Art of War 2	84	#42
Monopoly: World Cup 98	45	#26	Orion Burger	76	#11
Monster Truck Madness	77	#7	Outcast	59	#40
Monster Truck Madness 2	82	#26	Outlaws	78	#13
Monster Trucks	59	#19	Outpost 2	68	#18
Montezuma's Return	42	#32	Outwars	85	#26
Monty Python's Meaning of Life	57	#25	Over The Reich	70	#12
Moon Buggy 98	81	#18	Overboard	79	#19
Mortal Kombat 4	80	#30	Pacific General	82	#17
Moto Racer	94	#16	Pandemonium 2	20	#30
Moto Racer 2	86	#30	Panzer Commander	58	#27
Motocross Madness	94	#30	Panzer General 2	82	#21

SCORE LIST

GAME	SCORE	ISSUE
Paris French Open	72	#18
Pax Imperia	65	#21
Perfect Assassin	80	#19
PGA Tour Pro	86	#17
Phantasmagoria 2	81	#11
Pilgrim	46	#26
Pinball Soccer	72	#33
Plane Crazy	70	#26
POD	74	#11
Populous: The Beginning	86	#32
Postal	38	#18
Power Chess	83	#10
Power F1	69	#11
Powerboat Racing	70	#25
Powerslide	93	#32
Premier Manager 97	88	#16
Prince of Persia 3D	65	#43
Privateer 2: The Darkening	89	#8
Pro18 World Tour Golf	69	#38
Pro Pilot	62	#23
Puma World Football 98	33	#20
Quake	92	#6
Quake: Armagon	85	#12
Quake: Eternity	72	#12
Quake 2	94	#21
Q2: The Reckoning	82	#27
Q2 Mission Pack: Ground Zero	87	#30
Queen: The Eye	60	#25
Quest for Glory V	90	#34
Radix	68	#7
Railroad Tycoon 2	91	#33
Rainbow 6	91	#30
Rainbow Six: Eagle Watch	86	#36
Rally Challenge	84	#9
Rally Championship	81	#7
Rama	86	#10
Rayman	92	#3
Re-Volt	82	#41
Reah	78	#32
Realms of the Haunting	91	#11
Red Baron 2	92	#23
Red Baron 3D	87	#34
Redguard	78	#35
Redjack	70	#31
Redline	83	#37
Redline Racer	78	#24
Redneck Deer Hunting	16	#30
Redneck Rampage	77	#14
Redneck Rampage Rides Again	48	#26
Redneck Rampage: Route '66	64	#22
Requiem - Avenging Angel	90	#38
Resident Evil	74	#19
Resident Evil 2	88	#37
Return Fire	69	#4
Return Fire 2	72	#32
Return of Arcade	70	#5
Return to Krondor	79	#34
Ripper	70	#1
Risk	84	#15
Riven	90	#19
Riverworld	65	#31
Road Rash	80	#8
Rocket Jockey	68	#15
Rogue Squadron	82	#33
Roland Garros	85	#32
Rollcage	90	#38
Rollercoaster Tycoon	93	#36
Ruthless.com	82	#35
S.C.A.R.S.	64	#31
Sabre Ace	82	#18
Safe Cracker	49	#24
Saga: Rage of the Vikings	42	#40
Sand Warrior	68	#16
Scrab	81	#13
Screamer 2	81	#8
Sega Rally	72	#11
Sega Rally 2	68	#41
Sega Touring Car Champ.	29	#23
Semper Fi	50	#24
Sentient	68	#14
Sentinel Returns	84	#27
Settlers 2	87	#3
Settlers 2 Mission Disk	67	#12
Settlers 3	88	#33
Seven Kingdoms	87	#21
Shadow Man	61	#41
Shadow Master	70	#24
Shadow Warrior	80	#18
Shadows of the Empire	80	#18
Shadows Over Riva	84	#15
Shane Warne Cricket	86	#37
Shanghai Dynasty	93	#22
Shattered Steel	86	#8
Shellshock	40	#6
Sherlock Holmes	90	#9
Shivers 2	52	#14
Shogo: MAD	84	#32
Shrak Quake	40	#16
Sid Meier's Gettysburg	92	#20
Silent Hunter	74	#2
Silent Thunder	72	#2
Silver	84	#36
Sim City 3000	90	#35
Sim Copter	71	#10
Sim Safari	60	#25
Sin	84	#32
Sin - Wages of Sin	73	#38
Skydive!	12	#42
SlamTilt	68	#12
Snow Wave Avalanche	60	#33
SODA Offroad Racing	75	#22
Solar Crusade	26	#18
Soldier Boyz	12	#29
Soldiers at War	80	#27
Sonic and Knuckles	76	#13
Soul Reaver: Legacy Of Kain	81	#43
Space Bunnies Must Die	74	#31
Space Hulk	74	#5
Spearhead	89	#30
Spec Ops: Ranger Assault	84	#28
Speed Rally	89	#21
Speedboat Attack	30	#19
Speedbusters	91	#36
Spiderman: The Sinister Six	49	#11
Sports Car GT	90	#40
Spycraft: The Great Game	90	#1
Star Command	80	#14
Star Control 3	77	#8
Star Rangers	57	#2
Star Trek Academy	92	#17
Star Trek Borg	71	#13
Star Trek: BOTF	90	#39
Star Trek Generations	83	#13
Star Trek Pinball	76	#25
Star Trek: Deep Space Nine	64	#2
Star Trek: Starfleet Command	87	#43
Star Wars: Rebellion	88	#24
Starball	45	#2
Starcraft	92	#25
Starcraft Insurrection	79	#29
Starcraft: Brood Wars	87	#35
Starcraft: Retribution	71	#34
Stars!	89	#11
Starship Titanic	71	#24
Starsiege	90	#37
Starsiege Tribes	88	#35
Steel Panthers	84	#21
Steel Panthers add-on disk	75	#6
Stratosphere	82	#28
Street Fighter Alpha 2	69	#27
Streets of Sim City	30	#21
Strife	86	#6
SU-27 Flanker Mission Disk	88	#18
Sub Culture	82	#19
Super EF2000 Tactcom	92	#11
Super Stardust	89	#6
Superbike World Champ.	91	#34
Surface Tension	15	#9
Swat 2	75	#29
Swinehunter	64	#42
SWIV	82	#9
Syndicate Wars	91	#9
System Shock 2	98	#42
Take No Prisoners	81	#19
Tanarus	85	#22
Team Apache	83	#28
Tempest 2000	90	#1
Terminator: Future Shock	90	#1
Terminator: Skynet	94	#12
Terracide	65	#17
Terranova	91	#2
Test Drive Off Road	70	#13
Tex Murphy: Overseer	89	#24
TM: The Pandora Directive	93	#6
The Creed	86	#29
The Feeble Files	73	#19
The Fifth Element	80	#31
The Golf Pro	87	#24
The Last Express	88	#13
The Martian Chronicles	48	#9
The Neverhood	93	#9
The Phantom Menace	76	#39
The Reap	76	#23
The Ring	54	#33
The Tone Rebellion	80	#19
The X-Files	76	#27
Theme Hospital	90	#12
Thief: Dark Project	95	#33
Thrust, Twist & Turn	30	#39
Thunder Brigade	79	#35
Tiger Woods 99	79	#31
Tigershark	74	#15
Time Commando	93	#5
Time Lapse	80	#9
Titanic	74	#10
TOCA Touring Cars	94	#20
TOCA 2	91	#37
Tom Clancy SSN	75	#15
Tomb Raider	94	#9
Tomb Raider 2	86	#19
Tomb Raider 3	88	#33
Tomb Raider: Last Revelation	89	#43
Tomb Raider: Unfinished Bus.	68	#26
Top Gun: Fire At Will	60	#1
Top Gun: Hornet's Nest	65	#34
Torin's Passage	50	#1
Total Air War	92	#31
Total Annihilation	98	#18
TA: Commander	85	#34
TA: Core Contingency	90	#26
Total Annihilation: Kingdoms	84	#40
Total Mayhem	64	#3
Trespasser	60	#33
Triple Play 97	63	#5
Triple Play 98	82	#16
Triple Play 99	87	#26
Trophy Bass	72	#28
Trophy Bass 2	40	#25
Turok 2	54	#33
Turok Dinosaur Hunter	89	#20
Twinsen's Odyssey	84	#15
Twisted Metal 2	84	#22
Tyrian	54	#7
UEFA 98/99	71	#38
U.F.O.	73	#29
Ubik	81	#24
Ultimate Race Pro	68	#23
Ultimate Soccer Manager 2	72	#12
Ultra Violent Worlds	30	#29
Unreal	98	#26
Unreal: Return to Na Pali	72	#41
Uprising	89	#22
Uprising 2	58	#36
Urban Assault	81	#29
USCF Chess	71	#23
V2000	45	#33
Vangers	53	#29
Vegas Games	60	#14
Versailles	81	#11
Viper Racing	80	#34
Virtua Cop	82	#10
Virtua Cop 2	78	#21
Virtual Deep Sea Fishing	63	#38
Virtual Pool 2	93	#19
Virtual Snooker	80	#2
Voodoo Kid	79	#18
Voyeur 2	20	#5
VR Sports Baseball 97	91	#21
W. Gretzky & NHLPA Allstars	20	#1
Wages of War	65	#11
War College Simulator 3	57	#6
War Games	68	#29
War Gods	70	#18
War of the Worlds	70	#34
Warbirds 2	81	#37
Warbreeds	54	#26
Warcraft 2: 70 Levels	63	#12
Warcraft 2: Dark Portal	60	#3
Wargasm	80	#32
Warhammer 40K	88	#22
Warhammer: Dark Omen	88	#25
Warlords 3	89	#16
Warlords 3: Darklords	89	#29
Warwind 2	54	#22
Warzone 2100	88	#38
Water World	56	#19
WCW Nitro	52	#35
Wetrix	40	#31
Wing Commander Kilrathi	82	#9
Wing Commander Prophecy	90	#22
Wipeout 2097	75	#14
Witchhaven 2	59	#4
Wizardry	80	#9
Wizardry Gold	52	#4
Wolfenstein 3D	100	#25
Wooden Ships and Iron Men	71	#13
World Cup 98	84	#27
World League Basketball	58	#26
World League Soccer 98	85	#26
World Rally Fever	68	#4
Worms 2	90	#19
Worms Armageddon	83	#36
Worms Reinforcements	84	#5
Wreckin' Crew	27	#29
Wrestlemania	80	#5
WWII Fighters	92	#33
X-Wing Alliance	94	#37
X-Wing vs. TIE	93	#13
X Wing vs. TIE: Balance Power	83	#22
X-Car	61	#20
X-COM: Apocalypse	93	#15
X-COM: Interceptor	77	#27
Xenocracy	68	#28
XS	71	#9
Yoda Stories	74	#12
You Don't Know Jack XL	94	#2
You Don't Know Jack: Movies	88	#14
Z	72	#6
Zombie Wars	69	#13
Zork Grand Inquisitor	96	#20
Zork Nemesis	86	#2

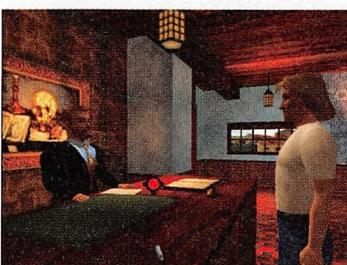
QUIZ ANSWERS
on pg. 146



PAGE 62 Omikron: The Nomad Soul



PAGE 66 Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear



PAGE 70 Gabriel Knight 3



PAGE 82 GTA2



PAGE 84 MS Flight Sim 2000



PAGE 88 Freespace 2

Original Sim

I've always found sims to be a little bit dull. It's got nothing to do with their design ethos (that is, to simulate real-life situations in a computer generated environment) - in fact, this should be applauded. It's their presentation. When the noises that emanate from your turbo jet engines resemble more the kitchen blender than anything else, it's a bit hard to suspend disbelief and immerse oneself within the simulated game world.

But I'm of the recently converted now. This month has seen us inundated with a huge bunch of quality sims - and I want to play them all!

First case in point is Madden 2000. If I had cable-TV, I'd have cancelled my subscription by now (incidentally - why, oh why dear commercial TV stations, did you fail to pick up the NFL football season this year?). I've been playing Madden 2000 almost religiously over the last few weeks and I can honestly say that I much rather play the sport on the PC than sit and watch the real thing. Links 2000, another exceptional

sports simulation, has had a similar effect on the PowerPlay collective.

And Flight Simulator 2000 - the undisputed king of flight sims - is equally impressive. We had the chance to load up Flight Simulator 4.0 on an old system and compare the two. Suffice to say, the series has truly come a long way. One of the most impressive new features is the ability to fly in up-to-the-minute real-world weather conditions that you've just downloaded from the net. Perfect!

Jane's USAF, SU-27 Flanker 2.0, NASCAR 3, heck - even Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear all do their respective sources of inspiration an immense amount of justice.

There simply has never been a better time to be a sim enthusiast. The titles look sharper, sound brighter, and offer so much more in terms of gameplay than ever before. And it's only going to get better.

March Stepnik
Deputy Editor

ISSUE 44 REVIEWS

62 Omikron: The Nomad Soul

66 Rogue Spear

70 Gabriel Knight III

72 Nations: Fighter Command

74 Seven Kingdoms 2

76 NASCAR 3

78 I-War: Defiance

80 Abomination

82 Grand Theft Auto 2

84 MS Flight Sim 2000

86 Jane's USAF

88 Freespace 2

90 Shadow Company

91 SU-27 Flanker 2.0

92 Traitor's Gate

94 Fox Sports NBA 2000

96 EA Sports Madden

2000

98 Links 2000

THE PC POWERPLAY SCORING SYSTEM



95%+ PLATINUM The Best. Virtually faultless, reserved for games which cause loss of sleep from thinking of nothing else.



90-94% GOLD A classic. Either an unquestionable example of superiority within its genre, or a ground breaking game that'll be setting trends.

80-89% A strong, eminently playable game. Hard to fault and likely to still be on the hard drive in 6 month's time.

60-80% Competent and generally enjoyable. Flaws or mediocrity hold these games back from higher ratings.

40-60% Average and ordinary. Not bad, not good. Ideal gift.

0-40% Bad, really bad. Boring, shamelessly unoriginal, cheap and horrible.

Omkron: The Nomad Soul

●Genre: Out-of-body Experience ●Players: 1 ●Developer: Quantic Dream ●Publisher: Eidos ●Distributor: Ozisoft ●Price: \$79.95 ●Rating: MA ●Available: Now
 ●Need: PII 233, 32MB RAM, 350MB HDD ●Want: PII 300, 64MB RAM, 16xCD, 3D graphics card (D3D, Glide) ●URL: www.nomadsoul.com

Sex, guns, demons and existentialism - mature gaming finally comes of age with this distinctly adult adventure.

TIPS

- Once a little way into the game - that is, you've figured out who you are and what you're doing - go out and explore the city. Practice at the weapon training centres and the holosuite in your apartment. Also, be on the lookout for the rings that litter many locations.
- The citizens you see walking around have no time to chat, but those you encounter sitting or standing still are happy to tell you about Omikron. Talk to them at every opportunity.
- Consult the memory database in your Sneak for clues as to what needs doing next.



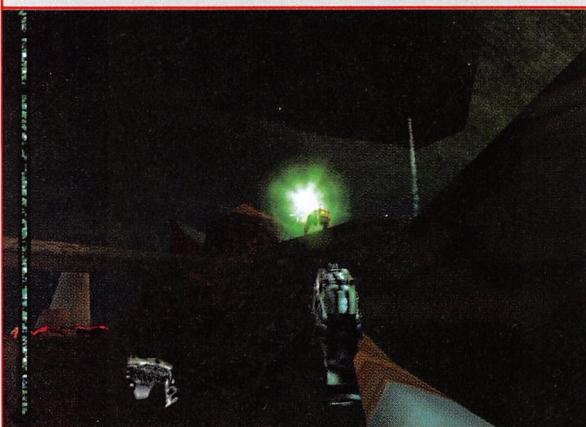
I'll get straight to the point: The Nomad Soul is a phenomenal game. Traversing an astonishingly broad range of gameplay elements - a strong narrative, first-person shooter action, plentiful character interaction and puzzle-solving, hand-to-hand combat set-pieces, driving sequences, et al - it emerges as the foremost contender yet for the title of the Complete Game.

Who Needs Genres?

When it came to filling in that little Genre box at the top of the page, I toyed around with various combinations and permutations of Adventure, Action and Role-Playing before deciding none of them could quite do justice to such a unique game. Even throwing them all together - as an

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

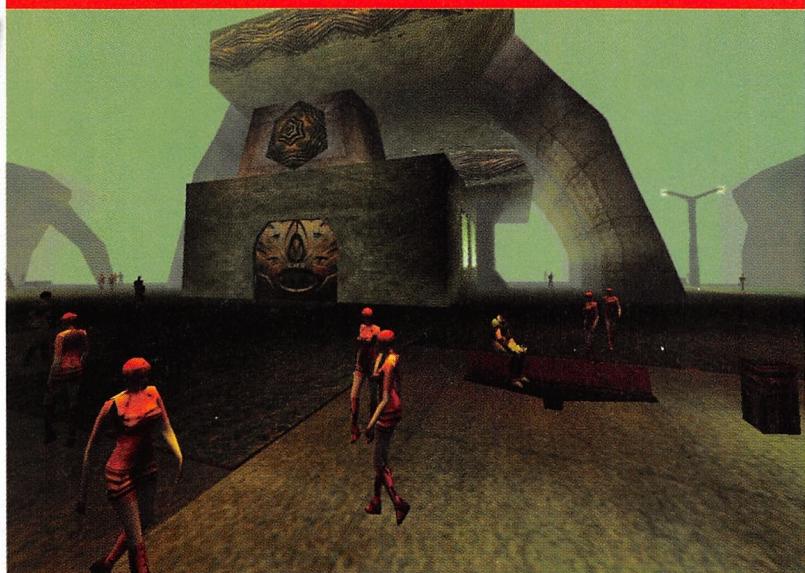
Early on in the game, Kay'l is called to investigate an armed robbery at a local supermarket. Once you arrive on the scene, the game switches to a first-person perspective as you shoot it out with the gun-toting crims. Elsewhere, there's a handful of "chaps" (Name changed to protect secret plot details - Ed) willing to engage in some Tekken-style fisticuffs should the occasion arise. While the shooter sections aren't exactly Half-Life, and the fighting doesn't scale great heights, both prove hugely entertaining diversions. The added sense of danger and tension incurred through these encounters benefits the atmosphere no end. Hey, sometimes it's nice to have a change of pace.



Take a break to blast some demons.



Hang on, haven't I seen you before somewhere before?



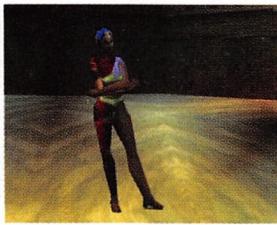
Action/Adventure/RPG - barely seemed adequate. Other titles have tried to meld together a diverse array of genres (the underrated Outcast being the most ambitious until now), but Quantic Dream has trumped everyone else with The Nomad Soul. It is a truly stunning achievement.

Immersion is a key factor in any successful game. Plausibility isn't necessarily a concern, as gamers tend to be willing to suspend that good old disbelief in an enthusiastic fashion; the realisation of a convincing, coherent virtual world, however, is the primary requirement. Offering as it does an enormous, sprawling city, heavily populated and unmistakably vibrant, The Nomad Soul accomplishes this goal in effortless style. But then it goes one step further, in the process guaranteeing a degree of immersion like no other game.

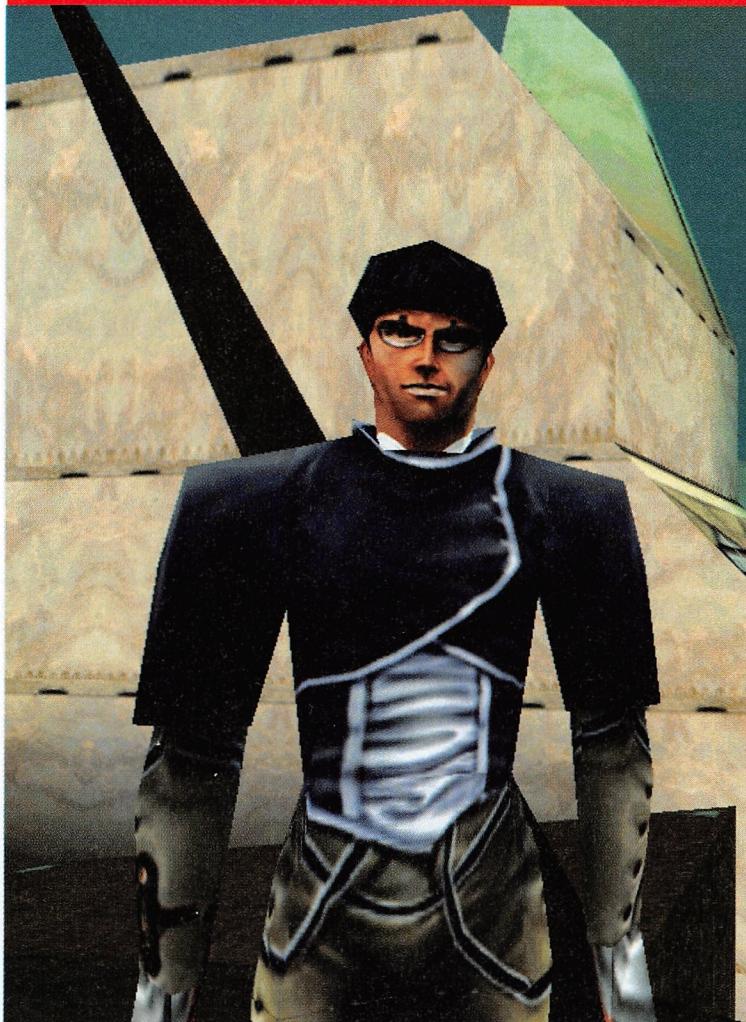
What Does Your Soul Look Like?

Quantic Dream's breath-taking conceit, upon which the game's entire premise is founded, is to have the player assume control of his or her own soul. That is, there is no one game character whose role the player takes. Instead, when you load up and start to play Omikron (which was the original title of the game before The Nomad Soul was added, yet also the name of the fictional game-within-the-game and the city in which both games take place - I hope that's not too confusing), you are approached by Kay'l, a police officer from a parallel universe. After explaining the danger he's presently in (and I'll leave the plot description at that), Kay'l pleads for assistance, requesting that your soul be transferred into his body as it presents the only opportunity for his world to be saved.

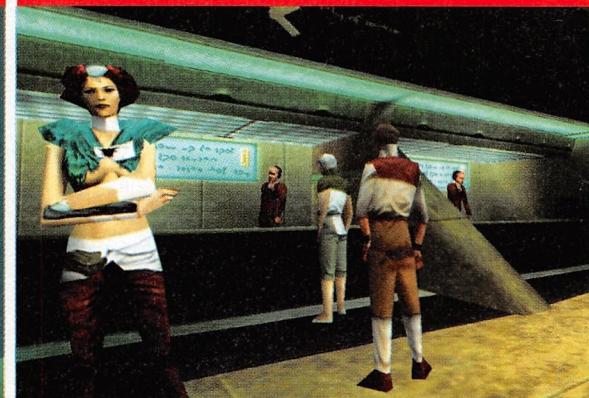
Thus, when the twin games of The



Bowls are clearly cheaper than a visit to the barber in Omikron.



Excuse me, miss, could I borrow your body for a bit?



Nomad Soul and Omikron commence, you find yourself in the body of a complete stranger, replete with his own personality, relationships and life history within this virtual world. Soul transference provides the dominant theme of the game and, rather than being a mere narrative contrivance, its effect permeates the whole gameplay. If Kay'l dies at any point, your soul will be transferred into the body of the first

'playable' characters will appear should your current host expire.

Your Host For Tonight

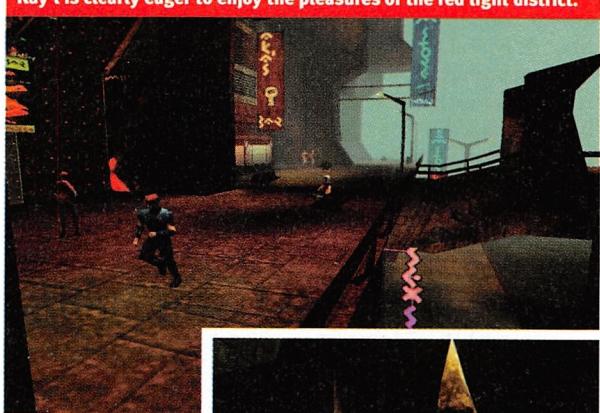
Once the adventure is well underway it becomes necessary to switch hosts, as the various characters possess different abilities (some are strong and tough, others are agile and sneaky, for example), occupy different professions and thus may have

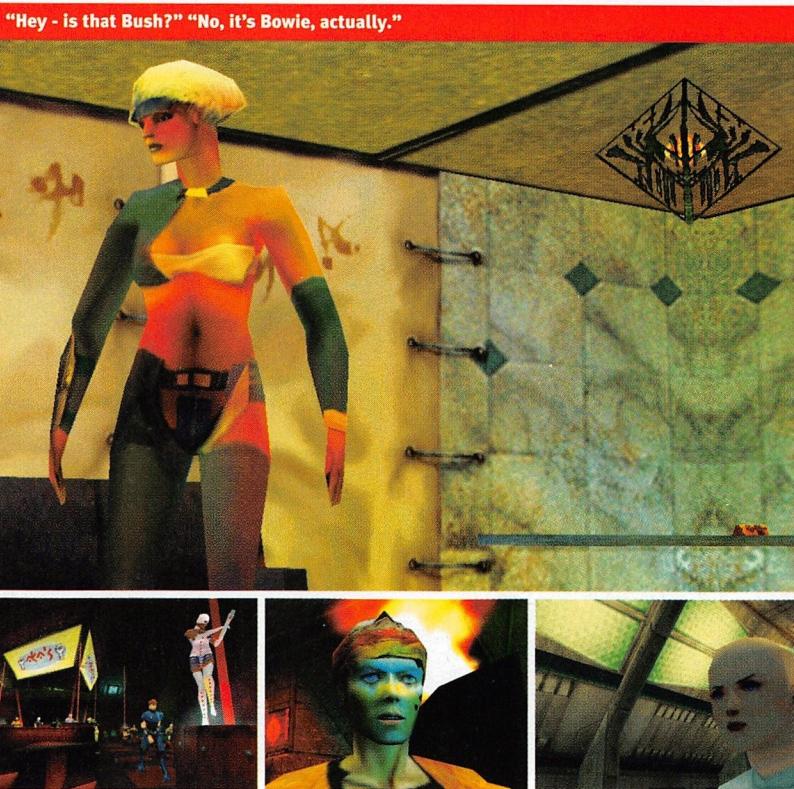
"Put simply: Omikron feels like a virtual city."

person who touches his corpse. Typically, a nurse from one of the hospitals arrives quickly on the scene, allowing you to continue the quest in her body. At various crucial moments, though, one of the many other

exclusive access to certain areas of the world. Selecting which host to adopt is critical to completing the tasks set for you by the game. However, it should be noted that choosing the right body for the job isn't the be-all and end-all of ►

Kay'l is clearly eager to enjoy the pleasures of the red light district.





► The Nomad Soul's puzzle aspect. Unlike the forthcoming Messiah, body-swapping plays a significant but not overwhelming part in the game.

Travelling through the five major regions of the city of Omikron and interacting with the considerable number of characters found within its environs is how much of your time will be spent. Traditional dialogue trees come into play when you talk to anyone, while the camera zooms in from its typical over-the-shoulder view to better portray the emotional reactions of each character. There is a host of characters who each play a pivotal role in the refreshingly sophisticated narrative, simultaneously fleshing out the story and providing pointers to your next objective. In addition, countless ordinary citizens mill about the streets, often willing to voice their opinions about the current state of affairs. Put simply: Omikron feels like a virtual city.

Policing the Peepshows

Quantic Dream have devised a nice balance between the linearity required by the strong narrative and the freedom demanded by every player to fully explore the expansive locales on offer. The game's undeniably involving atmosphere is deepened further by the sheer number of places to visit:



drugstores, weapon shops, strip clubs, libraries, peepshows, nightclubs, towering apartment buildings, hospitals, the police headquarters, virtual training centres, and temples, to name but some - the list is exhausting!

Though the story is driven by a thrilling urgency, it's nonetheless possible to leave it be for a while and just wander around doing your own thing. To some extent this is actually essential. In a nod toward the game's RPG leanings, those abovementioned virtual training centres must be frequented to improve your character's abilities. Unless you adjust the difficulty level to Easy, the fighting and shooting sequences are fairly challenging. For this reason, the right preparation is paramount to success. It must be said, though, your immaterial existence does grant the not-to-be-underestimated favour of eternal life; die during a fight or shoot-out and you'll still be able to carry on, albeit in another body.

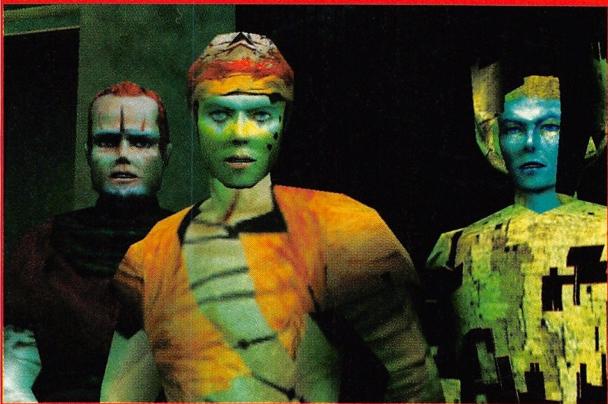
Cunning Violence

Ultimately, however, The Nomad Soul remains an adventure game at heart. Puzzles must be solved, whether it be finding an object hidden in suspect's apartment, discovering how to re-wire electrical equipment to your advantage, or maybe deciphering a

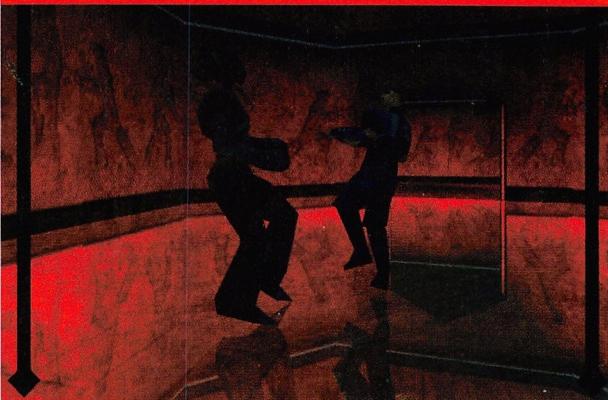
HEY DAVE

Throughout the city you'll come across flyers promoting secret gigs by The Dreamers, David Bowie's virtual band. Apparently, they're a notoriously subversive element, expressing their music without the authorisation of Omikron's Thought Controllers. Which is presumably why the gigs are so secret and the directions you get to find each one are so convoluted. Once you arrive, Bowie, his guitarist, and accompanying female dancer, will perform a song from the game's soundtrack (and the Thin White Duke's new album). Nice tunes, shame about the choreography!

Virtual Bowie meets virtual virtual reality Bowie. Virtually.



Tekken hits in the hand-to-hand combat bits.



riddle found on a dead body. Indicative of the game's depth, some situations have multiple solutions - one particularly impressive early incident allows the choice between direct, violent action and a cunning, non-violent alternative to achieve the same goal. The cleverness of the design is a constant source of surprise.

It's evident that Quantic Dream has expended much energy in ensuring The Nomad Soul avoids the pitfalls to which so many adventure games succumb. When the result is a game as beautiful, captivating and immersive as this, it's safe to say that their effort has proved more than worthwhile. The Nomad Soul has surpassed all expectations.

David Wildgoose

PLUS

Discover how the truth about near death experiences can be found within yourself at www.near-death.com. Funny stuff.



FOR: The best example yet of the hybrid game. Near perfect balance of adventure, action and role-playing. Brilliantly compelling and thought-provoking story.

AGAINST: The font used on the city signs is hard to read, making navigation a touch confusing at first.

93

Reward yourself this Christmas



QUAKE 3 ARENA for \$75
@ GAMES MARKET

.com.au

www.gamesmarket.com.au

Freecall: 1800-8GAMES (1800 842 637)

Email: info@gamesmarket.com.au

Free delivery **Free giftwrapping**

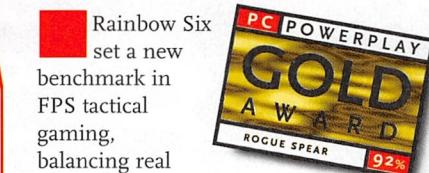
Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear

●Genre: Team-Based FPS Tactical Sim ●Players: 1-16 ●Developer: The Producers ●Publisher: Red Storm Entertainment ●Distributor: Jack Of All Games ●Price: TBA ●Rating: MA15+ ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P 233 MMX, 32MB RAM, D3D or PII 266 (software rendering), 200 MB HD ●Want: PII 266, 64 MB RAM, D3D-compatible video card, 410 MB HD ●URL: www.redstorm.com/rogue_spear/

Just when you thought you'd hung up your MPK SD5 for good, the world needs your expertise all over again...

TIPS

- Master the use of Go Codes as quickly as you can. The more time you spend planning the mission and co-ordinating the actions of your teams, the less time you'll spend replaying it.
- Use the optional 3D view in the planning phase to get a feel for the layout of the environment and set your waypoints accordingly.
- Wherever possible, your aim should be to give the terrorists more than one thing to think about at a time (i.e.: more targets!) Use a combination of shock action, noise and fire to overwhelm their senses at the critical time.
- Always peek first.
- Two or three larger teams is often more effective than four smaller teams. They can bring a wider range of capabilities and are more likely to survive.



Rainbow Six set a new benchmark in FPS tactical gaming, balancing real world settings, teamwork, and realistic action. Rogue Spear is the sequel we've all been waiting for, and it seems to have lived up to some pretty high expectations. It builds on its predecessor by taking the basics of an excellent game and tweaking it to classic status.

Once again, you're in command of an elite Rainbow counter-terrorist task force charged with saving the free world as we know it. Your team is made up of international special-forces

representatives; each an expert in assault, sniping, reconnaissance, demolitions or electronics. John Clark, Chavez and the rest of the team are back for another crack at the forces of evil - this time in the form of terrorists with more money to spend than most medium sized countries.

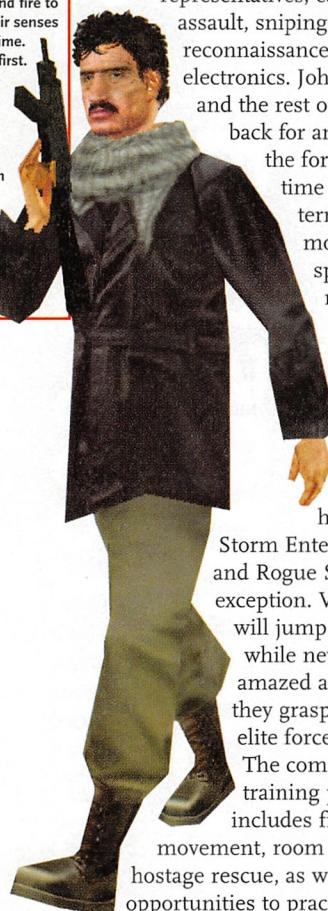
All class

Crisp,

quality interfaces have become a hallmark of Red

Storm Entertainment titles, and Rogue Spear is no exception. Veterans of R6 will jump straight in, while newcomers will be amazed at how quickly they grasp the basics of elite force operations.

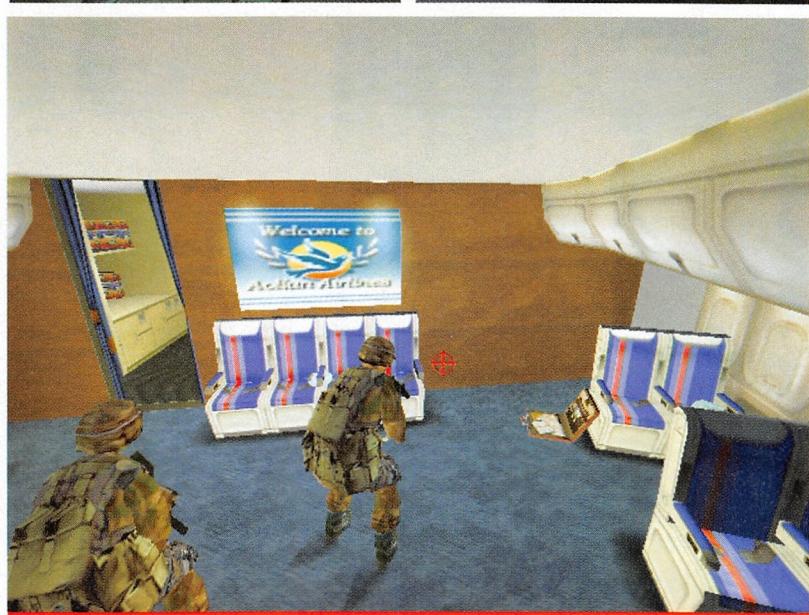
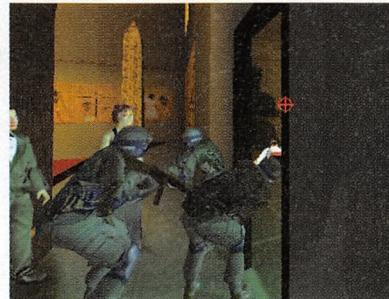
The comprehensive training package includes fire and movement, room clearing and hostage rescue, as well as ample opportunities to practice the co-



PEEK FIRST, SHOOT LATER

Terrorists have a nasty habit of hiding behind corners. Peek view lets you size up the situation before you commit to a course of action, and reduces the chance that you'll be taken by surprise. Peeking is particularly good for finding the exact location of terrorists and hostages, as well as planning grenade and flash bang attacks.

Sneak a peek, evaluate the situation, and confirm or modify the plan. Once mastered, peeking using the mouse doesn't slow the game down at all, as a quick flick of the wrist becomes part of normal movement. As an added bonus, weapons can be fired whilst peeking, gaining the jump on the unsuspecting terrorists.



If only real 747's had this much leg room.

ordination of several teams. As your confidence grows, you can move on to terrorist hunts in mock-ups of kill houses and city streets, before taking on your first live mission.

Virtually everything in Rogue Spear is configurable. Listen to the briefing, check the latest intel, and then structure your team and plan the mission accordingly. Team members can be chosen based on their individual skills and specialisation, and their weapons and supporting kit can be modified to meet your needs. Default mission plans are offered for each scenario, but of course making the hard choices for yourself is really the heart of this game.

Tangos

Rogue Spear is chock-full of new and exciting ways to kill the terrorists, or Tangos. Sniper rifles have been introduced and the operation of all weapons has been made more realistic. Even heartbeat sensors have been introduced to provide early warning of terrorist movements. All the old standbys are also there, including standard and silenced versions of assault rifles and pistols, flashbangs for non-lethal actions, grenades and explosive charges. Primary and secondary weapons can be allocated to the entire force, or specified individually for team members, allowing each group to be configured





(bottom left) "The toilet is secure Mr. President. You may 'fire' when ready."

"Rogue Spear is chock-full of new and exciting ways to kill the terrorists, or Tangos."

for its part in the overall plan.

In addition to the standard campaigns and single missions, two new options are available to test your skill. Lone Wolf mode lets you revisit completed missions on your own, opposed by a force of thirty terrorists. With no squad to provide backup, going it alone offers some of the most exciting and challenging gaming I've experienced.

Alternatively, Terrorist Hunt mode offers essentially the same thing but with a full squad. Your job in both Lone Wolf and Terrorist Hunt is just to survive and take out the terrorists. Although you don't have to worry about saving hostages, the threat posed by the terrorists does more than enough to compensate. Both modes will ensure a long life for this game.



immersive. The 3D graphics are superb, and the use of real world locations adds a terrific degree of realism. Tension builds as you move through each of the mission preparation screens, and keeps right on building as you hit the execution phase. The Rogue Spear world is big, detailed and dangerous, and the sense of environment created through a combination of sound, visuals and event triggers has raised the bar once again for FPS gaming.

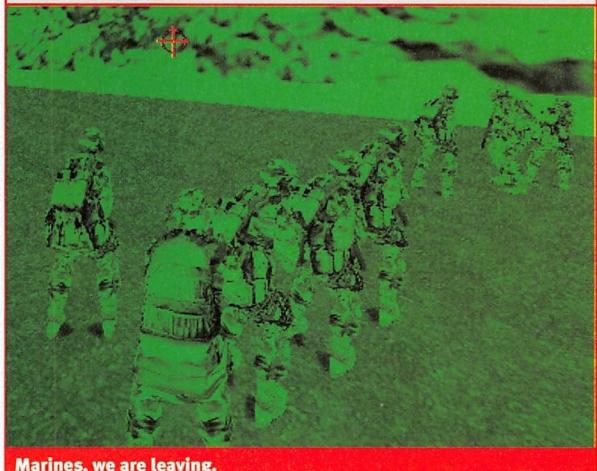
But this isn't merely a FPS experience.

Thinking, planning and stealth play major roles in Rogue Spear, and co-ordination of your forces is critical to success. Although you can crash through alone in some missions, the odds are very much against you at the higher difficulty levels.

Remember - there's no 'I' in team (*There is before a spell check - Ed!*) In any case, for a truly realistic experience you have to face the

DYNAMIC TEAM CONTROL

You have a lot more to think about in Rogue Spear than in a traditional FPS, as you have to co-ordinate the actions of your own team, as well as up to three others in the mission area. Things tend to happen pretty fast in this game, and so the sooner you master the team control interface the better. A simple keystroke will take you to any of the other teams, after which you can jump in and control them directly. To keep your primary team out of trouble while this is going on, give them a hold command that will keep them in place until you return. This is also useful if you want to have a quick look around without taking every man and his dog along. All teams can also be halted if necessary, which can be useful while you get your own team into position or if the plan starts to come unstuck.



Marines, we are leaving.



Want something more from an FPS? Cop this!



Kamp Krusty appeared strangely deserted...

Team work

The atmosphere in Rogue Spear has to be experienced to be believed! It's beautifully

TIME SPENT IN RECON IS SELDOM WASTED

Timing is everything, and the Planning Screen is where you bring it all together. Just like in real life, you can't control each team directly, and so your aim is to give simple, concise instructions to your whole force. The Planning Screen provides the locations of key landmarks, and the suspected whereabouts of the terrorists and their hostages. Use it to plot waypoints for all of your teams, specify

rules of engagement, and decide on the speed at which the mission will occur. Special actions can also be assigned to individual teams, such as the use of grenades or flash bangs when entering a room, door breaching, or sniping. Once the plan has been finalised, you co-ordinate the whole operation through the use of key stroke Go Codes.



► challenge of controlling the actions of other squads, in order to make sure they burst through the other door, or provide covering fire, at just the right time. A second too soon (or too late) and the hostages may die! Just like the real thing, you're relying on others to get it right.

Squad tracking

As mentioned earlier, the interface is very similar to that of R6, although a number of improvements have been made. Most importantly, an overhead in-game map lets you keep track of your other teams, enabling co-ordination and improving situational awareness. As an active map, it allows you to track the movement of your squads using the cursor keys. This is a particularly useful tool if you're lost, or if things start to go wrong and a quick redeployment is in order! Watch mode has also been retained from the R6 Eagle Watch expansion pack, enabling you to sit back and monitor the execution of the entire plan.

From a FPS perspective, the greatest enhancement is the introduction of the 'peek.' Just edge up to a wall or door and peek around it by sliding the mouse. This does away with the need to convert a large part of your character's anatomy into a convenient target for trigger-happy terrorists! As simple as it is, peeking adds to the tension, and reduces the likelihood of blundering into a room with all guns blazing, only to see the terrorists execute their captives and cost you the entire mission.

Realistic AI

The AI in Rogue Spear has also benefited from the R6 experience, although a few annoyances remain. In general, terrorists now react much more realistically, posing a far greater challenge. They'll actually withdraw if the odds are against them, waiting until you stick your head around a corner



Not that old 'terrorist in an evening dress' trick again?



to get it shot off. Similarly, they won't just blunder in as cannon fodder, and they continually move around the mission area. Reaction times for both sides are also more realistic, and wounds have a significant effect on character movement.

Just like R6, Rogue Spear is a real winner in multiplay. It's fully configured for the MSN Gaming Zone and Mplayer.com, as well as LAN and internet play. A remarkable range of

options is provided, including kit restrictions and the use of equipment not available in single player mode, and both adversarial and co-operative games can be set up. All 18 single missions are available for co-operative play, and AI 'buddies' can be added to each team. All in all, Rogue Spear offers one of the best multiplayer packages available.

Polished challenge

Rogue Spear is a superb representation of Special Forces operations and great fun to play. The mix of strategy and FPS elements results in a realistic and challenging game that will keep you thinking and on the edge of your seat. It's a polished title, with excellent graphics, great sound and a first class interface. Pull on your balaclava, check your ammo, and get ready for some very late nights!

Major Des McNicholas

PLUS

www.usia.gov/topical/pol/terror/

Find out more about the real world struggle against terrorism at the Institute for Counter Terrorism. The site includes statements by the UN and Bill Clinton, as well as official Fact Sheets on the US approach to terrorism.

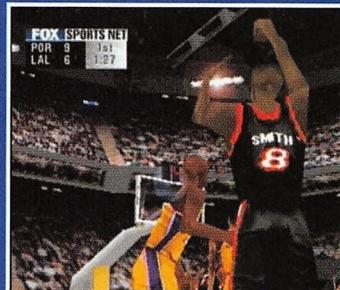
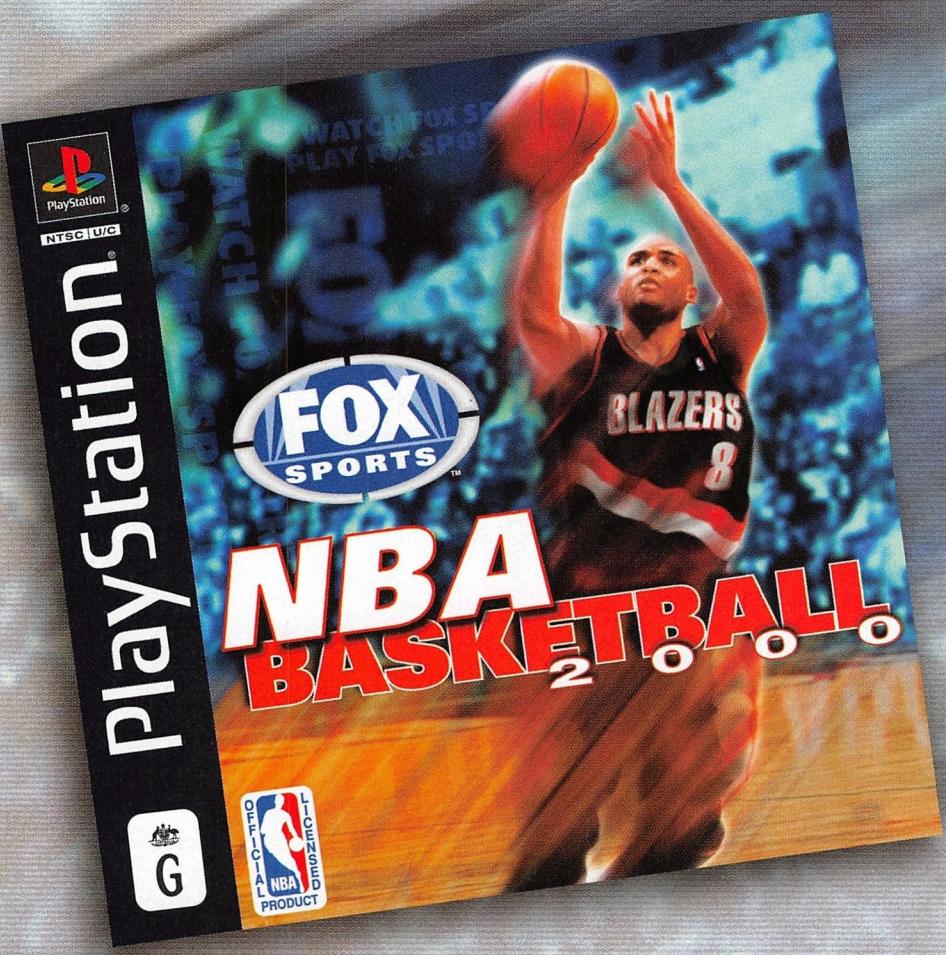


FOR: Great atmosphere, nerve-racking excitement, and a high degree of realism. A very long life in both single and multiplay.

AGAINST: Some AI problems and a linear mission structure.

92

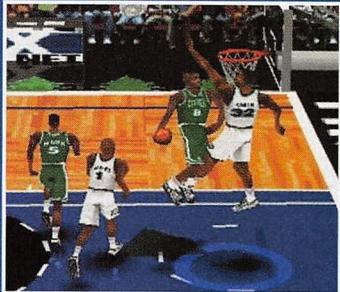
INTRODUCING THE NEWEST WAY TO PLAY BASKETBALL



Camera angles that put you in the action



Tons of different dunks



Addictive gameplay that's fast and fun

SPORTS GAMES FOR SPORTS FANS.TM

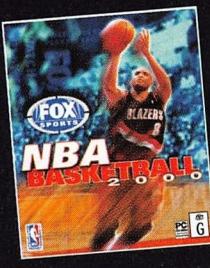
foxsports.com

log on for more info,
screenshots and downloads



nba.com

Distributed by
ACTIVISION



Also on
Windows®
95/98 CD-ROM

PC
CD-ROM
Windows® 95/98

FOX
SPORTS
INTERACTIVETM

©1999 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All Rights Reserved. "Fox," "Fox Sports," "Fox Sports Net," "Go-To-Guy," "Fox Sports Interactive," "Fox Interactive," "Twentieth Century Fox" and their associated logos are trademarks and the property of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. The NBA and individual NBA member team identifications used on or in this product are registered trademarks and copyrighted designs, and/or other forms of intellectual property, that are the exclusive property of NBA Properties, Inc. and the respective member teams and may not be used, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of NBA Properties, Inc. ©1999 NBA Properties, Inc. All rights reserved. Windows and the Windows logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Manufactured and printed in the U.S.A. Licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment America for use with the PlayStation game console. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. THIS SOFTWARE IS COMPATIBLE WITH PLAYSTATION GAME CONSOLES WITH THE NTSC U/C DESIGNATION. U.S. AND FOREIGN PATENTS PENDING.

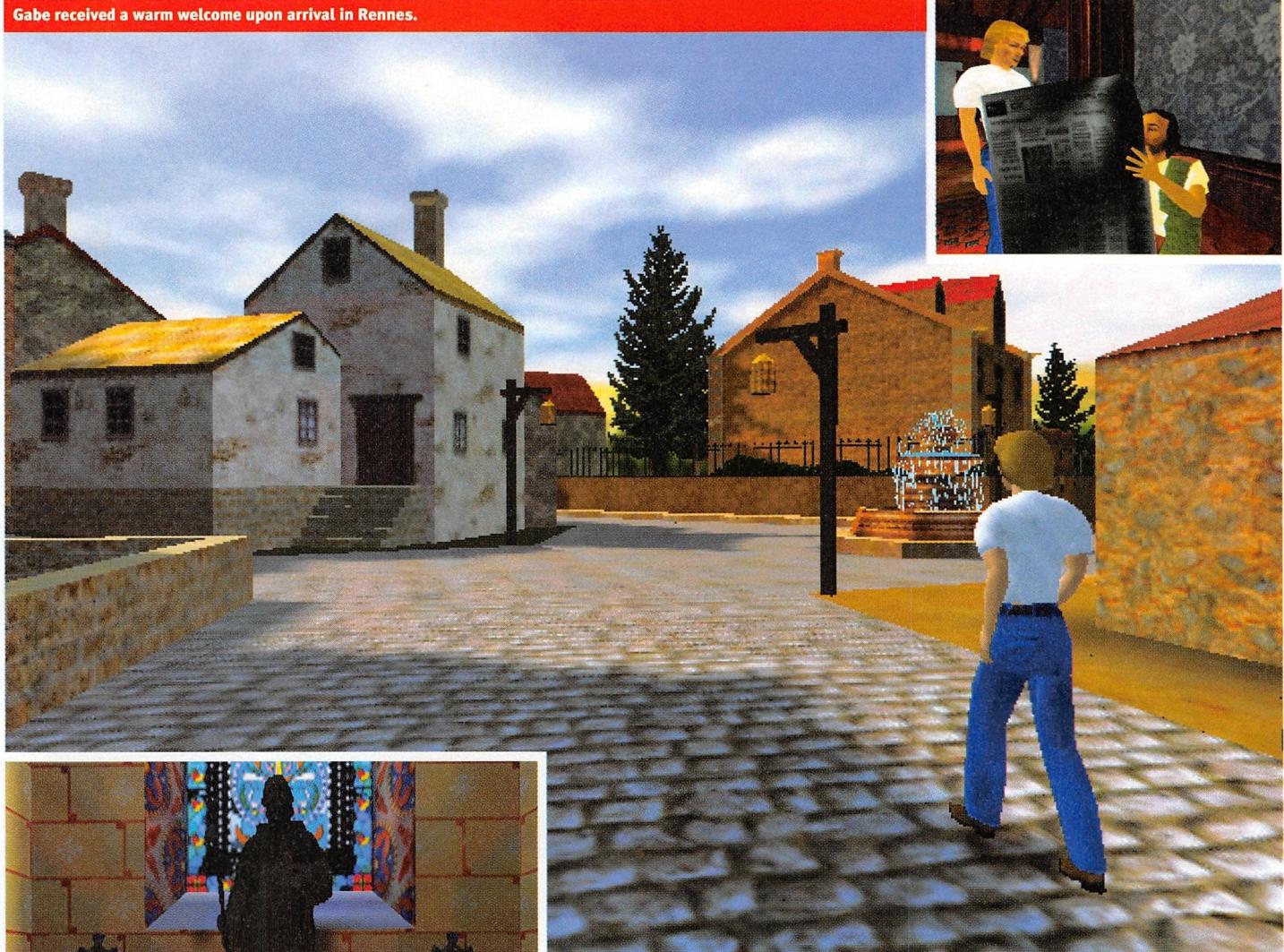
PETT 992865

Gabriel Knight 3

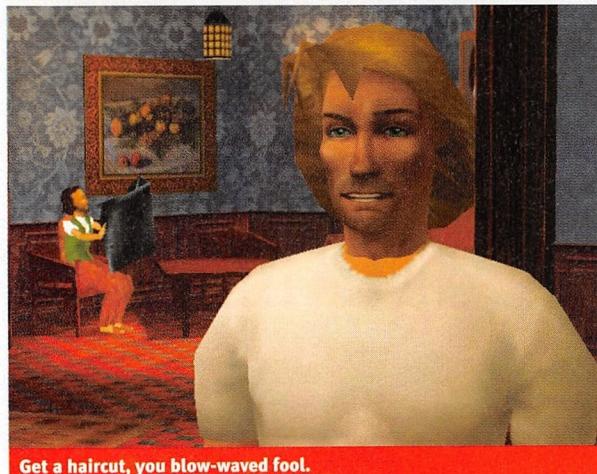
●Genre: Occult Mystery ●Players: 1 ●Developer: Sierra ●Publisher: Sierra ●Distributor: Dataflow ●Price: \$TBA ●Rating: M ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P166, 32 MB RAM, 4xCD, 3D graphics card (D3D) ●Want: P233, 64 MB RAM ●URL: www.sierrastudios.com/games/gk3/

If you can tolerate Gabe's Southern drawl, then there's a masterful and rewarding mystery waiting to be unravelled...

Gabe received a warm welcome upon arrival in Rennes.



Historical detail is one of GK3's strengths.



Get a haircut, you blow-waved fool.

First things first. Brush up on your Catholic lore and get a copy of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*. Secondly, cancel all social engagements because you are about to say goodbye to your nights, weekends and very probably lose your job, get kicked out of school and go through a messy separation with your significant other. Because Gabriel Knight 3 is one hell of an addictive and complex mystery experience.

Shut Up, Tim

The third in the continuing adventures of the occult detective and general moron (*Well, I'd say he's more of an acquired taste - Ed*), the eponymous Knight is played again by Tim Curry with a truly awful Southern accent. This time you are finding the heir of European prince. Said infant is abducted and taken to the small French town of Rennes and dragged into the millennia-and-a-half old mystery of

Rennes Le Chateau and the terrible secret at the heart of Christianity. This is the stuff of Knights Templar, Cathars and the demon Asmodeus. It's complex, lurid with history and all steeped in rich accuracy.

In the GK tradition, it's not an easy plot to work through. All sorts of shady and dangerous characters hold the keys to certain clues and a very, very careful eye is required or you can easily walk past a vital scrap of evidence. Even better, the character interaction is as much a part of solving the case as is slotting clue A into solution B. People lie to you, follow you and, of course, no one is to be trusted. NPCs even make simple factual mistakes.

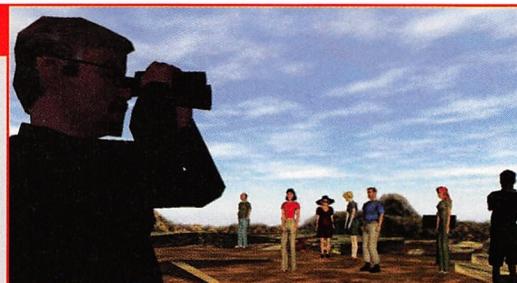
Spatial Logistics

Aiding this complicated plotline is an extremely clever new interface that is pretty unique amongst not only adventures, but indeed games of any

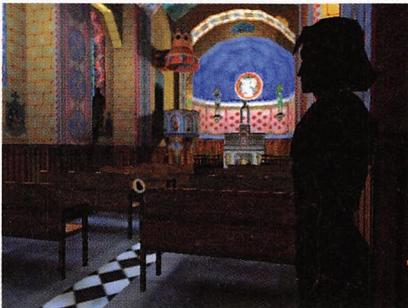
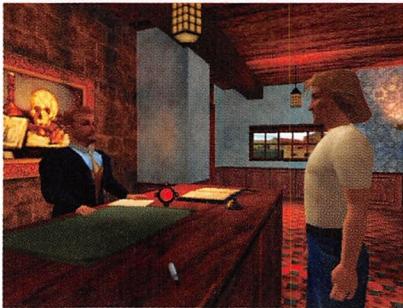
PAN, DOLLY AND ZOOM

The camera angles are in many ways the key to not only navigating the game, but indeed in solving the mystery of Rennes Le Chateau. Certain rooms and outdoor scenes can be packed full of clues and hints about the possible directions the plot will turn. What seemed like an inconsequential throwaway piece of landscape could take on newly sinister

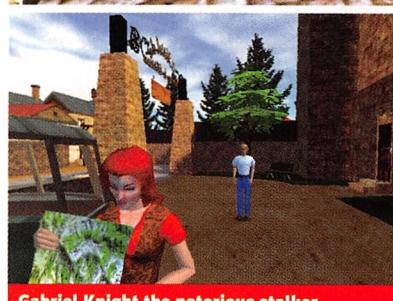
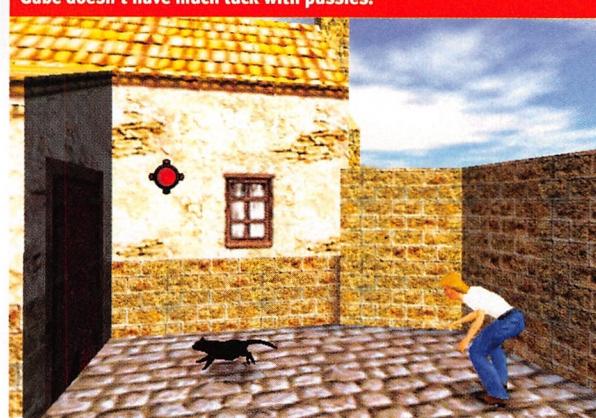
meanings as the game progresses, and if you have not thoroughly investigated areas you will not get far at all. The dimensions of many areas are so large they simply cannot be viewed without the roaming camera. At first the process seems laborious, but with a bit of practice you will see that it is a fascinating and rewarding way to interact with a game world.



Hey, isn't that George Lucas?



Gabe doesn't have much luck with pussies.



Gabriel Knight the notorious stalker.

type. On every discrete gameplay section the camera can be detached completely from the Knight character and will move around giving a 360 degree panoramic effect. It is fast moving and allows tremendous scope of interaction within each area. There is a sense of immediacy in this form of gameplay that brings out the importance of scanning and paying close attention to the environment; if you don't, the game will be lost on you. One of the more difficult things to accommodate is the sense of spatial logistics. Sometimes you long for a simple first-person POV, yet the fashion in which this multi-perspective camera brings locations to life manages to outweigh such concerns.

The physical/character interaction is easy as well. The usual suspects of adventure commands - look, talk, pick up, use and leave - are present, but a zoom-in option lets you take long hard looks at landscapes and characters that are important to the case. But the designers kept the aforementioned game immersion in mind, and as such other tasks can be performed, including eavesdropping, smashing, break-and-entering and sundry others that appear only when needed. This saves much time with repetitive "I can't do that" messages commonly found in adventures.

Speaking menus have a similar function, using symbols to denote certain common thematic conversations and letting you know in a subtle, non-intrusive method when you are onto a new topic. If it flashes up again with

new or old characters, you know you are making progress. But, best of all, when you are frustrated or unsure of what to do, there is an intermittent hint menu and if you have completed all tasks in an area, the game will have a lightbulb flash up and Knight will tell you what to do.

Rough Around The Edges

While the plot and interface may offer a cornucopia of wonders, there is one major let down - and that is the visual element of the game. To be perfectly frank, it's just not the most attractive looking game. Character animation is wooden and occasionally poorly detailed. It's hardly an action game, admittedly, but it does detract from the experience. Nor is texturing any great achievement. While some areas are vibrant and realistic (the interior and exterior of the church, for example), others are flat and clash badly with those textures around a corner. Trees and water, similarly, look rather two-dimensional and uninspired. The fact that the character texturing, especially the facial detail, is of a first class quality brings such flaws into sharper focus.

Gabriel Knight is not a game for kiddies. It's not a straight adventure game in the manner of Discworld Noir or the Monkey Island series. It's a fully-fledged mystery. It should be

undertaken by those of us who appreciate pitting our minds against the mind of the creator. While on certain levels it is perhaps not the total gorgeous package it could have been, the sense of tension and mystery will make up for these possibly superficial flaws. For any fan or gaming, I recommend that you have a look at Gabriel Knight 3. It does not boost gaming into bold or strange new directions, but it provides a thought-provoking and memorable story that resonates long after you have witnessed the final scene.

Christian Read

PCPP

FOR: Incredibly detailed gameplay, great character interaction, engaging mystery.

AGAINST: Disappointing visuals in places.

PLUS

Rennes Le Chateau was first brought to mass consciousness in the book, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, and concerns the true history of one of the most important and revered figures to ever exist in the western world. The historic events surround the Albigensian Crusade and the true activities of the Templars are a source of mystery and intrigue to scholars. To find out more of the fascinating *Secret History of Christianity* view
<http://www.knight.org/advent/cathen/1493a.htm> or about Rennes itself visit
<http://www.rennes-le-chateau.com/>

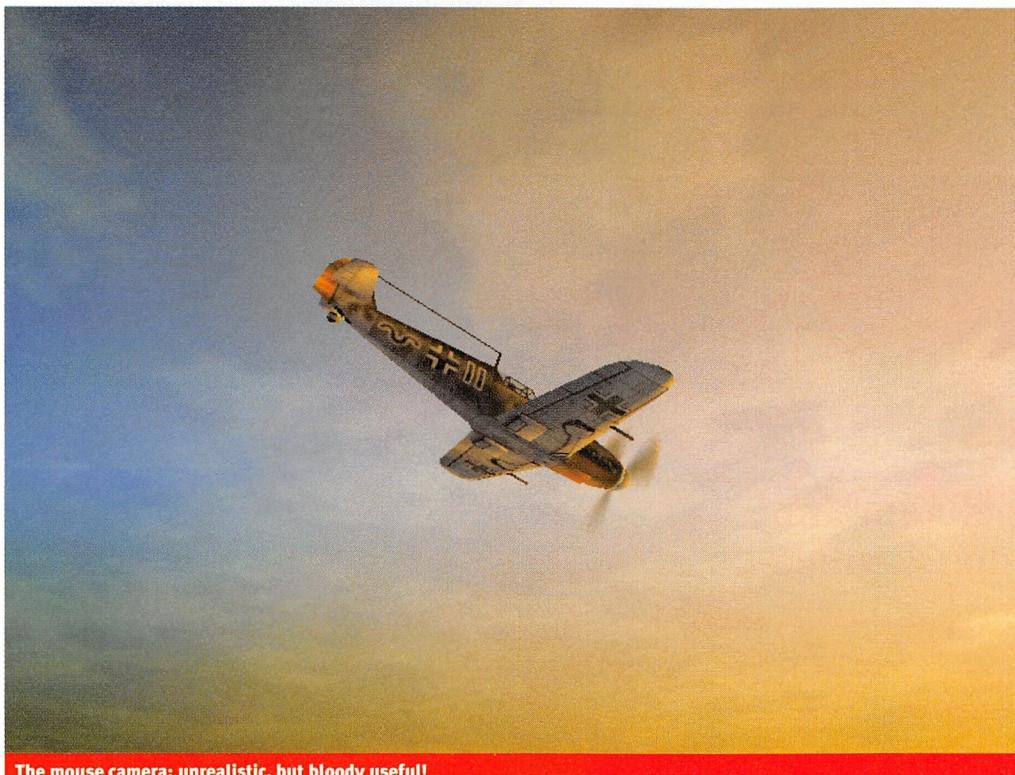


87

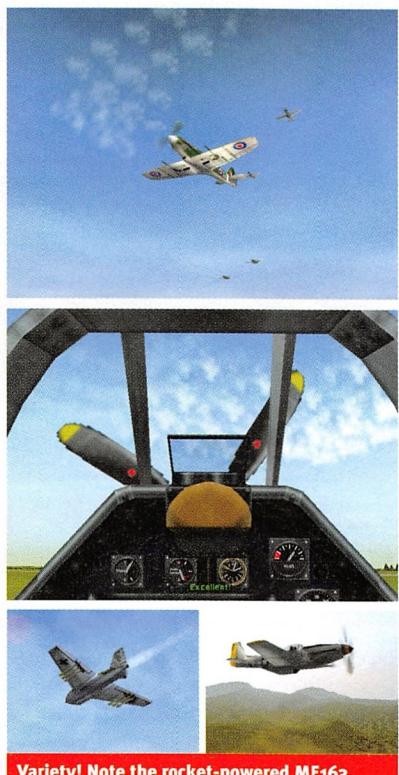
Nations: Fighter Command

●Genre: Historical Flight Sim ●Players: 1-64 ●Developer: Psygnosis ●Publisher: Psygnosis ●Distributor: GT Interactive ●Price: TBA ●Rating: G ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P 233; 32MB RAM; 200GB HD; Direct X compatible 3D Card ●Want: PII; 64MB RAM; 320GB HD; AGP 3D ●URL: www.nations-game.com

Wear with pride the colours of your great nation as you thunder into combat. Literally!



The mouse camera: unrealistic, but bloody useful!



Variety! Note the rocket-powered ME163.

TIPS There's something special about watching Spitfires screaming in over the green fields of England. In Nations: Fighter Command, Psygnosis have captured the atmosphere of an era and given us something that's great to play and beautiful to look at. This game oozes quality and period feel from the moment you strap in. Sixteen different aircraft types are available to fly in 45 missions, as you take to the skies for either Britain, Germany or the United States. A total of thirty-seven aircraft are modelled in the game, supported by a comprehensive database.

Learnin' to fly

Training missions cover the basics of getting in the air and back down again, as well as dog-fighting and the humbling retreat. Although the training seems a bit light at first, it's enough to get you going before you jump in to

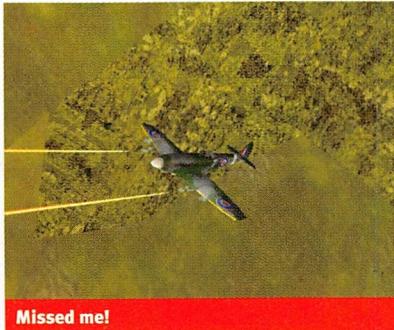
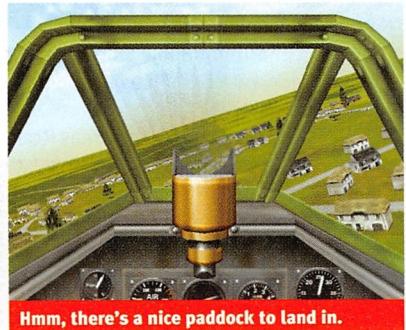
save Britain, conquer Europe, or duel it out in North Africa. Once the basics are under control, choose from a host of quick action missions, including squadron duels, one on one dogfights, and bomber escorts. Ground and convoy attack missions are particularly well done, placing Fighter Command above many of its predecessors.

Linear campaign missions

Having earned my wings, I jumped into my first campaign with high expectations. Some aspects of campaigning, however, are a little disappointing. Promotion, successively better aircraft, and increasingly difficult missions are well handled, but the campaigns themselves are linear - demanding the successful completion of each mission before the next can be tackled. And although the individual mission briefings are excellent, no real

effort seems to have been taken to pull the whole campaign together. Some form of strategic element would also have rounded things out nicely.

Those sins will be forgiven once you jump into the cockpit. High quality graphics, realistic flight modelling, and superb sound combine to make Fighter Command a remarkable flying experience. This is a difficult sim to master in realistic flight mode, but it does cater for both beginners and veterans. Working your way up from the basic level is well worth the effort, as real-world flight characteristics pose new challenges and add to the intensity of combat. For example, jumping into an Me 163 after a few missions in a 109 is an incredible experience, made all the more so by entirely new handling, the unfamiliar roar of a jet engine, and last but not least - great mood music.



THERE'S NOTHING BETTER THAN A GOOD FEEL

Nations: Fighter Command feels great! The team at Psygnosis have gone out of their way to capture the atmosphere of air combat in WWII. It seems that as much effort has gone into that aspect of the game as into the flight model itself. The net result is a complete package that just drags you right into the game environment.

You simply have to hear the sound effects to believe them - they're the best I've heard in any

flight sim. Engines sputter to life, coughing smoke as they go; machine guns and cannons are distinctly different depending on which aircraft you're flying; the aircraft all feel different (just jump from a Hurricane to a Spitfire to see what I mean!); and the background music is straight out of a 1940's war movie - you'll actually want to leave it on. Add some artist quality graphics and you've just lost half a century!



"...look for a nice flat paddock..."

Bloody nationalists

Providing situational awareness is a tough call for flight sim developers, particularly in games that pre-date high technology solutions such as HUDs and radar screens. Psygnosis have opted for marking targets with national symbols that gradually dim as they come within range. Scan the skies; look for the enemy flags and charge on in! It's simple and it works. Also, by configuring the marker toggle to your joystick, you can get rid of them if the screen becomes too cluttered. Target marking is also supported by a fairly cumbersome padlock view, and by a mouse controlled camera view that lets you look just about anywhere.

Damage modelling is very well done in Fighter Command, and it adds volumes of tension to the game. It's hard to hit the target, but things develop in a spectacular way when you do. Smoke, fire and debris generated by the hapless victim all pose hazards to the gloating victor, and you'll know about it if you're on the receiving end. The attention to detail is exceptional, such as the adverse effect of damage on flight handling, and the sounds associated with airframe stress and the activation of control surfaces. With accurate damage modelling of twelve critical aircraft systems, the first inkling you'll have about that damaged fuel line may well be smoke in the cockpit or a



failed engine - either way, look for a nice flat paddock and keep your finger over the eject button!

Beginner friendly

Given the effort that has gone into the artwork of Nations: Fighter Command, it's surprising that the external view options are limited to cockpit and fly-past. The rendering of close objects is stunning, but the developers have failed to capitalise fully on this aspect of the game. It would have been nice to be able to see this game in all of its visual splendour from other, more typical vantage points.

Some of the keyboard layout is also unusual to say the least, although it's



good to know that they're entirely configurable within the options menu. On a more positive note, all missions can be recorded, with both the mouse camera and fly-past available for the replay.

Nations: Fighter Command is a welcome addition to the WWII genre. Unmatched in atmosphere, it's beginner friendly as well as challenging for the more experienced player. Minor gripes about the campaign package and view options just hold it back from getting higher praise, but this is a great sim. An ideal entry point for newcomers to flight sims, with more than enough meat to keep old hands happy.

Major Des McNicholas

PLUS

www.websitepartners.com/flightline/aircraft.html

Check out this remarkable WWII aircraft database to find out just about anything about the aircraft of WWII's major players. Features include fact sheets on all aircraft, a glossary of air terms and names, and a useful bibliography. You can also compare the characteristics of various aircraft - such as rate of climb, firepower and speed. A WWII buff's dream!



PCPP

FOR: Reasonable learning curve, realistic flight model, and the best sound package I've ever come across. Dripping with atmosphere.

AGAINST: Linear campaign structure, insufficient view options and no strategic element. No mission editor.

82

Seven Kingdoms II

●Genre: Real Time Strategy ●Players: 1-8 ●Developer: Enlight Software ●Publisher: Ubi Soft ●Distributor: Ubi Soft ●Price: \$TBA ●Rating: G8+ ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P120, 32MB RAM, 80MB HD ●Want: P233, 64MB RAM, 170MD HD ●URL: www.enlight.com/7k2

A sterling sequel to an underrated strategy gem.



Sometimes great games fail to get any real attention because they are released at a time when another similar game is stealing the limelight. Seven Kingdoms is perhaps the perfect example of this sort of game, because thanks to b-grade graphics, it looked like a budget title next to Dark Reign and Total Annihilation, which were big at the time. Now Seven Kingdoms II is here, and while it is remarkably similar to its predecessor, that really isn't a bad thing, and it polishes up in all the right places.

Unlike your average RTS game, Seven Kingdoms II has no set single player campaign to go through to unravel a story. Basically you have a medieval warfare game that is sort of a



"She's got spies, but they're nothing like the KGB..."

cross between Warcraft and Civilization. There are twelve historical civilisations to choose from, and a bit of a fantasy element thrown in with seven Fryhtans (nasty humanoid monsters) races available for play, too. This is a deep, multi-faceted strategy game that combines combat, diplomacy, espionage, trade, and to a small extent resource management, to produce a war game that allows a far more diverse way of dealing with your enemies than any other game in the genre. Besides a few one off scenario missions, there is

the option to play either a single skirmish, which you can tailor to your liking, or play a dynamic campaign of many missions. Of course multiplayer is there too, and the plethora of ways to approach the game make for a nice unpredictable experience.

Troop Loyalty

As with the original Seven Kingdoms, each mission plays out in a way so that all actions have a dynamic effect on other aspects of the game. You can't just churn out troops at will, because you

TIPS

- If you're about to lose a town to the enemy, clear out the population into wagons immediately. Without the peasants there, your enemy has scored a hollow victory.
- When playing multiplayer, do something to distract your enemy when sending spies to his towns or forts. Ask them if they're getting lag, etc. Dirty, but effective.
- Get peasants working ASAP, either as troops, or workers.
- Building Towers of Science around a town you are trying to take over when its resistance rating is 50 or lower. This will do the rest of the job for you, and provide jobs immediately.
- Keep checking your ranking to see where you stand in the current game. If you rank lowly in military, produce more forces immediately.
- Make sure your units and buildings have their settings right so your forces react accordingly. This is important when attacking buildings, or when defending your own forts.

IMPROVEMENTS ALL ROUND

For those of you that enjoyed Seven Kingdoms, there are some nifty improvements in this sequel that make the game a better experience. Besides the no-brainers like the ability to play as the Fryhtans and the step up in graphics, there are some thoughtful ideas put to use.

No longer do you have to train civilians in a trade, as they are all simply peasants who can become workers. Peasants automatically take up jobs in the building you create, and you can adjust how many can work there with a

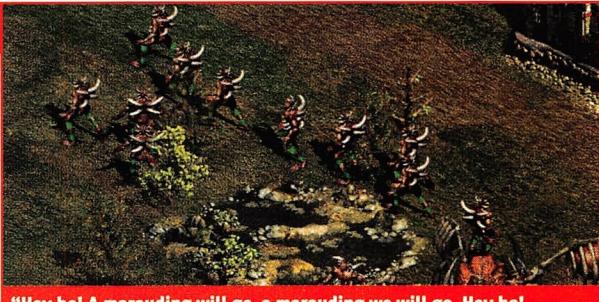
simple slide bar. Research can now be made in a variety of areas, allowing you to give yourself a strength your enemy may not be prepared to deal with, whether that be by military improvements, improved trade and production to try to buy other forces outright, or advanced espionage. Spies can now perform extra functions like stealing technologies. The hotkey system is thorough, and the interface hard to fault, missing none of the handy functions you expect in RTS games.



IS BEING BAD MORE FUN?

Playing the game as the Fryhtans is a bit different in that besides being the ugly one who doesn't get any, you also don't have to manage civilians or trade. Fryhtans need to earn life points, by enslaving human towns and feeding off them. Life points are used for tech advancements, and breeding new units. It's far less in-depth than

when playing as a human kingdom, and as a result it ends up being a far less rewarding experience. It is however a good way to ease into the game if you're a bit daunted by having so many options. The computer AI is exceptionally nasty with Fryhtans, and they make for the hardest opponents if they get a decent force moving.



"Hey ho! A marauding will go, a marauding we will go, Hey ho!"

That looks like a very convoluted trade route.



"...you can find your own forces joining an enemy ..."

need to train them from civilians, and unless your towns are built in such a way to promote population growth, you'll soon have no means to make more troops. You can't just neglect your troops either, as every unit in the game has a dynamic loyalty rating. If you push too hard, you can find your own forces joining an enemy who they feel will treat them with more respect.

What about trade? You don't think you need that extra cash? Your people are much happier when they have access to goods at the market. This can lead to population growth, which you need for your military campaign. You can also actually buy out an enemy if you have the funds to do so.

There's also espionage to take into account. It may seem a waste of time to get a spy to undermine the loyalty of an enemy city a little bit, but if you develop your research into espionage, you can end up doing far more dramatic things, like getting your enemies to attack one another, or perform assassinations which can turn a difficult siege into an easy one.



This may seem a bit much all at once, but besides a general game speed alteration, you can also issue commands while paused, much like you would in a game such as Baldur's Gate. This is vital to succeeding, as the game is challenging, even on the easier difficulty settings.

Each civilisation has a unique building and unit to produce, and also their own slight racial traits, but the real difference from one unit to another is how experienced they are. You can't treat troops like cannon fodder. Getting that wounded veteran of yours back to a fort to rest is more than worth the effort. A strong leader can be more effective at getting an independent town to join you than beating them into submission.

Random Letdown

Seven Kingdoms II is a notable improvement upon the original, but there are areas of the game that could still use some work. While the visuals are better this time around, they're still a bit behind the eight ball. The artwork for the buildings is impressive, but units look far from spectacular. The thing that really lets down the visuals are the horrendously dull environments. This

If there are seven kingdoms, why do they all look the bloody same?

affects the gameplay, too, as maps generated randomly almost never offer strategic choke points, so you never get pitched battles anywhere other than at a fort or town.

The only other problem is that the game has little in the way of charm or character. Real-time strategy fans are used to snappy verbal responses and funky unit design to give the game feel, and Seven Kingdoms II just doesn't have it. Those that crave more refined gameplay techniques won't mind this, but those of you who demand a bit of razzle dazzle with their RTS games will.

Seven Kingdoms II is a prime example of brilliant design in game mechanics. This is a game for those who take strategy games seriously and not for those who don't have time to master their strategies. Trevor Chan is proving to be an A-grade designer of computer games, and it should only be a matter of time till he is backed by a budget that will allow him to create a game that is as spectacular as it is deep.

Dan Toose

PLUS

The Hutchinson Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval Warfare
In Seven Kingdoms II you can invoke higher powers to smite your enemies... But that's not how it really happened is it? This dictionary is the perfect guide to becoming a "mass slaughter ye olde style" expert.

PCPP

FOR: Multiple ways of approaching the game. Excellent interface, with all the tedious bits taken away. Highly customisable.

AGAINST: Lack of character or feel. Boring maps due to only two terrain types, and lack of varying elevation. A bit too hard for newcomers.

86

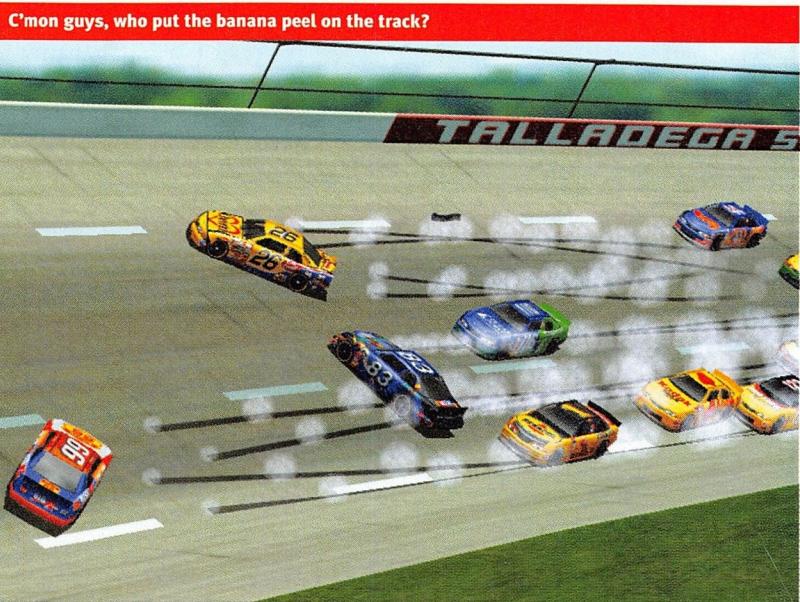
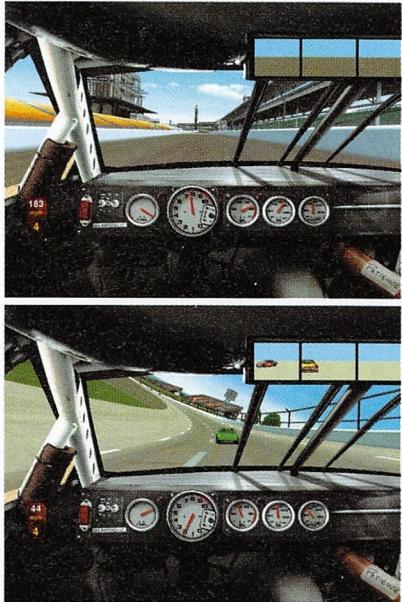
NASCAR 3

•Genre: Racing Sim •Players: 1-43 •Developer: Papyrus •Publisher: Sierra Sports •Distributor: Dataflow •Price: \$69.95 •Rating: G •Available: Now
 •Need: P166, 32MB RAM, 250 HDD Space, 2xCDROM •Want: PII266, 64MB RAM, 250 HDD Space, 3D Accelerator, 4xCDROM •URL: www.papy.com

Who'd have thought that doing 250 laps around a large oval track could be this much fun?

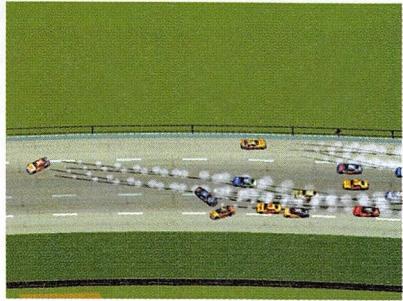
TIPS

- Smooth is the word, try to get into a smooth rhythm during each race.
- Keep the revs as low as possible to help reduce fuel mileage.
- During a race caution period, keep the car in fourth gear, this will help squeeze a few extra laps out of your fuel.
- Stiffer socks will lead to faster lap-times, but will wear the tyres much faster.
- Try to angle the wedge setting so as to offset the cars natural roll into corners, this will provide additional stability and allow more speed in corners, but watch those tyres!



Papyrus are quickly becoming masters in the automotive racing simulation industry. The benchmarks set by every new release are continually raised with each follow-up title. The class and quality with which they spurt out these gold-plated games has now become the standard by which all sims of the racing genre are judged.

The latest in their best selling series of racing titles, NASCAR 3, boasts some impressive additions to the previous incarnation. Improved looks, beefy audio, and big doses of realism make for another winning combination.



Animated flag men!

Papyrus have performed a major upgrade in the graphical department. NASCAR 3 is now one of the prettiest racing sims available today. Get this: persistent skid marks, shaded racing grooves, animated flag men, and caution lights located around each track that actually flash when a race is under



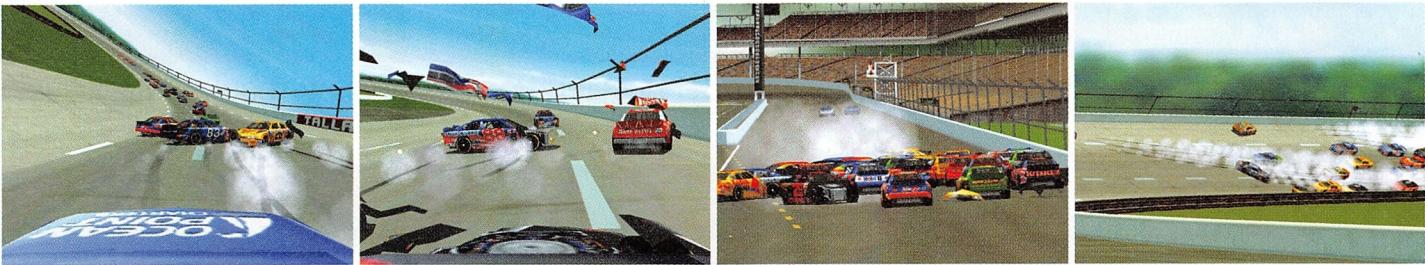
caution! The sense-ometers blow through the roof when an accident takes place as bits of car and smoke are thrown everywhere. Trying to navigate safely through a ten car pile up whilst completely blinded by a cacophony of screeching and tyre smoke has never been this much fun! Support for D3D and Voodoo based hardware has been incorporated allowing resolutions of up to 1024x768; however to fully appreciate the updated graphics engine, a hefty CPU with lots of ram is required. Want to change your car's colour scheme? No worries, included is a paint shop feature allowing extensive modification of any car within the game. The only limit is your imagination, or artistic capability as the case may be.

HARE AND THE TORTOISE

NASCAR racing is not just a sport of speed and skill, but also a test of endurance and strategy. Each race on the Winston Cup calendar lasts for approximately 200 laps, and the car that wins is not always the car that is fastest - as the true legend of Nascar racing, Dale Earndhart, proved during the recent race at Talladega. Earndhart qualified 27th on the

grid, but due to a fantastic race strategy and a few opportune yellow flags he managed to win the race. During the post race interview he simply stated that throughout the race he watched his fuel mileage and was easy on the tyres, which gave him a distinct advantage over his competitors, enough so to win the race.





Smart-mirror

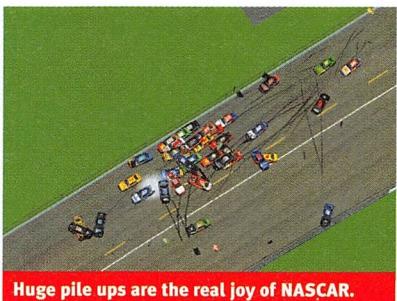
The improvements to NASCAR 3 aren't all graphical either. Posing major problems in most modern racing sims is the dreaded blind spot. Papyrus have taken this into account by providing wonderful three-way mirrors which look directly to the left, to the right, and directly behind your vehicle, reducing the likelihood of those all-too-common "I didn't see you!" racing incidents.

Also new to NASCAR 3 is the addition of 3D sound. This feature does wonders to increase situational awareness. There's nothing quite as nerve wracking as knowing a car is just inside your left rear panel as you enter a turn with only two laps to go. Listening to the glorious opera of thunder that is two stockcars side-by-side can only be compared to the mechanical symphony heard from the cockpit cameras on TV. Also wonderfully apparent is your team spotter, who through the duration of a race provides helpful cues on your current situation: "Car high, car low, three wide! Lookout! An accident right in front of you! Ahhhrrg!"

Nothing much has changed in the front-end area though. Nifty looking backdrops with the traditional selection of racing options, which include single race, championship, testing and multiplayer to name a few. Most noticeable is the addition of a dedicated internet play feature, allowing racers join or host races via the ever-popular medium.

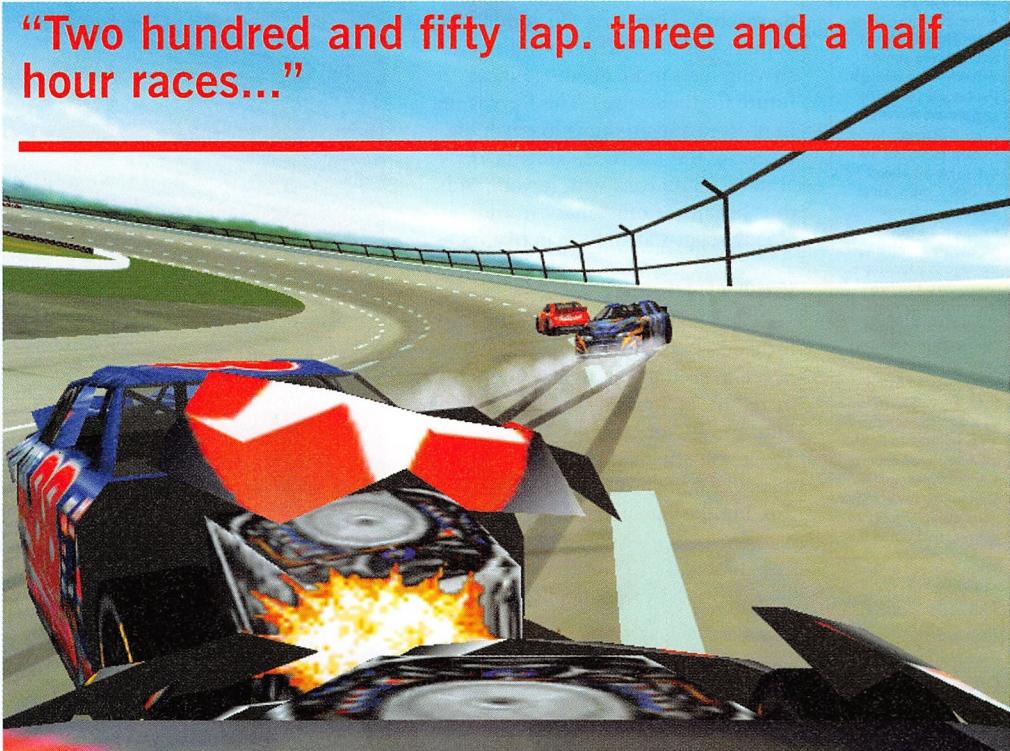
250 laps of joy

Driving in NASCAR 3 is as hard or easy as you like. AI driver skill can be set on a sliding scale by anything from one to one hundred percent, however I found that with anything below eighty percent, the opposition might as well be standing still. As with AI skill, race distance is also adjustable via the same method. Two



Huge pile ups are the real joy of NASCAR.

"Two hundred and fifty lap, three and a half hour races..."



hundred and fifty lap, three and a half hour races are obviously not going to be everyone's cup of tea.

All aspects of real NASCAR racing have also made it into the game: pace laps, yellow flags, double-file restarts and random breakdowns. Weather conditions can be modified by changing temperature and wind speed, or for that authentic feel, set it to random.

A staggering thirty tracks have been included, from the brickyard of Indianapolis to the 200MPH monster that is the Michigan Raceway. All have been depicted in fantastic detail - with gigantic, visually spectacular grandstands, positioning poles, authentic track-side fencing, large billboard advertising and those memories of by-gone "incidents" in the shape of gruesome black scar marks along the track wall.

Smooth as silk

Driving a NASCAR at full-speed is an extremely challenging experience, and Papyrus have recreated this marvellously.

At low speeds the car seems to drive like your everyday family vehicle, but get that tacho up to the red line, and the level of skill required increases. Driving at top speed is an art form in itself; you need to be smooth as silk, yet also be able to react in a split-second. The physics engine is very similar to NASCAR 1 and 2, providing the true feel of managing a 500kg beast around the track.

AI drivers in NASCAR 3 have been tweaked to the point of questioning whether or not these are PC drivers or the real deal! NASCAR 3 sees drivers holding their race line and not giving in as they did in previous versions, and you will never be sure what line a driver may take.

Trophy of triumph

NASCAR 3 is without doubt the greatest closed-wheel racing simulation to date, and in my books, is yet another glorious trophy of triumph on the already chock-full shelves of the simulation masters Papyrus. ■

Edward Fox

PCPP

FOR: Gorgeous cars, stunning tracks, total immersion and tight furious 3-wide racing...

AGAINST: All but two oval tracks; left, left, left... Falling asleep at the wheel is not uncommon.

PLUS

www.nascar.com

What the hell is NASCAR? Go this way, young initiate...



89

Independence War: Defiance

• Genre: Realistic Spaceflight-combat Sim • Players: 1 • Developer: Particle Systems • Publisher: Eidos • Distributor: Ozisoft • Price: TBA • Rating: G • Available: Now • Need: P166, 32Mb RAM, 160 MB disk space, PCI Video Card, 4x CD-ROM, Win 9.x • Want: PII300, 64MB RAM, 200MB disk space, genuine 3Dfx accelerator(Glide), Voodoo3 for ultimate performance • URL: <http://www.independencewar.com>

The hard sci-fi spaceflight sim is back, with 3D acceleration and a new rebel perspective!

TIPS

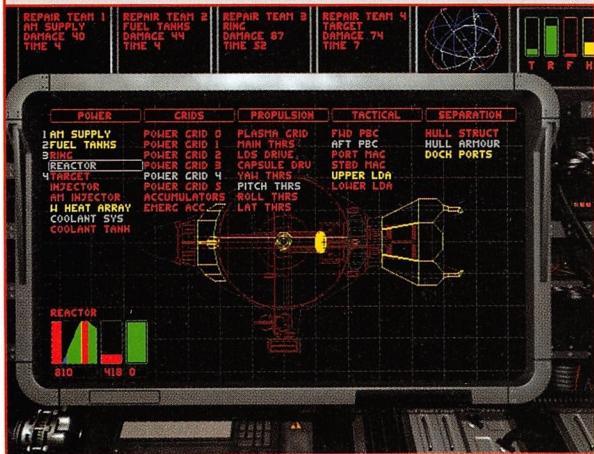
- I-War is a very complex game. Although it may seem quite playable at first attempt, you should definitely play through the tutorials to understand the whole control system.
- Learn to master the extensive AutoPilot modes, if you wish to succeed.
- A basic knowledge of how to deal with major damage to your ship is invaluable. You can overcome many crises if you take charge of the repair process and prioritise which systems need fixing, first. You can learn to fly a partially damaged craft, in order to finish off a "winged" enemy.
- Additionally, you should play I-War with a good quality joystick to get the most out of it.



DAMAGE CONTROL

The engineering bay view in I-War lets you pinpoint damaged systems and prioritise their repair.

You can also permanently postpone any repair of systems, and allocate variable power requirements to different shields, engines and weapons. Your choices should be profiled against the enemies you face. For instance if the enemy is far more nimble than your craft, you will want to allocate a much higher bias to rear engines and attitude adjusters, to allow deft manoeuvring.



In the new era of commonplace space transit and industrial intergalactic shipping, a small band of rebellious individuals struck out for themselves. Opposing the dominating authority of the Space Navy, they are striving for a more liberal political future for themselves. The Navy is not impressed and attempts to crush the uprising. But the Independents, or "Indies", fight back with fervour and thus began the most massive and bloody space-war in human history.

Happy balance

I-War holds the crown for the most realistic spaceflight simulation that never crossed the boundary into the incredibly tedious, as textbook titles like Elite and BC3000 tended to.

On the other side of the coin, fluffy titles like Wing Commander are great fun, but they are generally still a

straight adaptation of the atmospheric dogfighting that occurred during the first



Looks like these guys overdid the bubble bath when cleaning the ships.



and second World Wars, with the removal of gravity and a "ground" to crash into. Even modern aircraft don't engage in the old aerobatic tactics, which are primarily designed to bring machine guns (of old prop planes) to bear. In the infinite vastness of space this kind of activity is even more implausible, because anything approaching to attack you must travel several thousand kilometres in clear space to even reach a distance where they can circle around your craft.

More likely, an arsenal of ultra-long-range weapons and systems to counteract these same weapons would be applied. This game is not quite that progressive, though it's arguable whether that kind of simulation would make an interesting -

or more importantly, an enjoyable - action flight sim at all.

Independence War (I-War) strikes a very happy medium between the two worlds, being both exciting to play and mostly realistic.

+I-War

The original Independence War game saw you in command of a vessel in the Navy fleet - in the new "Defiance" missions you play in control of an "Indie" ship. In fact the entire original game is included as part of this game, yet it's been glorified with the 3D acceleration it so sorely lacked in its first incarnation. It looks fantastic, but being exclusive 3dfx support as it is, there are many would-be players with non-3dfx



(left) The local space jockey chatting up the software. (right) Regulation Heroic Pose #2932

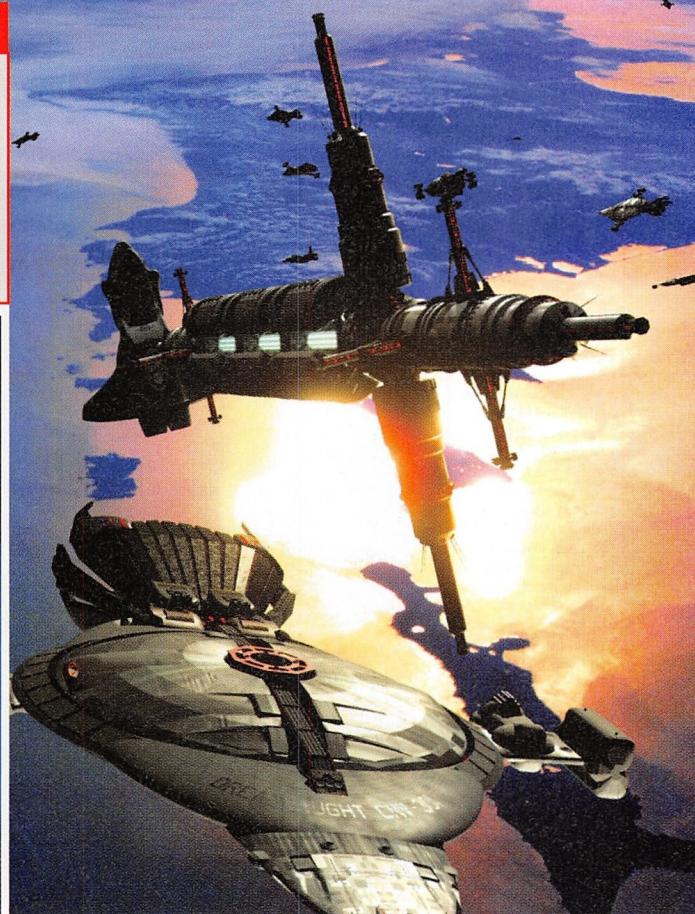
- Special Edition

IT'S JUST LIKE THE MOVIES!

The excellent Full-motion video sequences in I-War tell a complex and absorbing story of political intrigue, suspense and high drama. The video sequences alone are very stimulating encouragement to complete all the missions available.



DIRECTOR - TRACKING VIEW - SPARTACUS



"...happy medium, being both exciting to play and mostly realistic."

equipment, who will be forced to endure it in software mode. Again. Sigh.

Meanwhile the new missions are interesting, being played from the rebel military perspective, yet without the crisp fastidious approach of the Navy briefings. Also the Indie ships look far cooler than their Navy counterparts, being bespattered with lurid graffiti designs and arrogant slogans. Flying these vessels-with-street-cred is an unusual experience, but unfortunately you will not meet with much resistance. The new "Defiance" missions, the only new part of this game besides the 3D acceleration, are far simpler to complete than the original I-War

campaign. Sure, they are well-designed and of a comparable

calibre, but the lack of real challenge will sour players who reach the end too quickly. We should expect more from Particle Systems after such a long pause between releases.

Slightly dated

It is certainly true that Independence War, when it was first released, set a new standard for realism in spaceflight sims. But without improvements to the in-game views and the HUD layout, Defiance already looks rather dated. With the absence of a full-screen, no-cockpit view, and without much improvement to function accessibility, it's difficult to recommend Independence War: Defiance to fans of the genre. Due to the efficient organisation of functions and commands in comparable titles of late, Independence War has come to look and feel less streamlined than it did when first released.

PLUS

www.synapse.ndo.co.uk/science/moon_h2o/index.html
Check out this way cool discussion of the real-world applications of space mining. All seriousness intended. This page in particular, explores the possibilities of looting craters laden with ice, which forms where the sun's rays never glimpse, in the deepest craters at a moon's poles.



PCPP

FOR: Looks glorious in 3dfx, still the most enjoyable of the realistic spaceflight sims. Outstanding storyline.

AGAINST: Low difficulty level, few improvements to the game itself, beyond the new missions.

Telstar Ponies' "Maps and Starcharts" is a great song.



If prospective players are searching specifically for more realism and depth in a spaceflight sim, and have never played the original, then I-War: Defiance gets a hearty thumbs-up. But for existing fans, there's not quite enough on offer in this rather re-hashed package. The next instalment of the Independence War series, on the other hand, is looking unbelievably good. We're content to wait for it.

Hendry Saunders

72

Abomination: The Nemesis

•Genre: Squad based, mutant thumping, action strategy •Players: 1-16 •Developer: Hothouse Creations •Publisher: Eidos Interactive •Distributor: Ozisoft •Price: TBA •Rating: M •Available: Now
 •Need: P166, 32MB RAM, Win95/98, 8x CD-ROM, 2 MB SVGA Card •Want: PII, 64MB RAM, Win95/98, 12x CD-ROM, 4 MB SVGA Card. •URL: www.eidos.com

What do you do when a deadly mutagenic virus starts seeping across the globe? That's right! Blast everything in sight!

TIPS

- In the city levels, use the vehicles as makeshift explosives - lure your enemies around a vehicle and then just aim for it. It's a good way to kill a few of them and knock the others off their feet.
- In any level, be tactical. Use the geography to your advantage. Luring your enemies into isolated passages, allows you to better ambush them. Being cowardly often saves your agents.
- Although it's a heck of a lot of fun, don't get into raging standoffs where you lose sight of one or more of your troops. Staying in control of the situation makes victory a lot easier.
- Since you're upgrading your soldiers, you don't want to lose any of them. Especially as all of that experience comes in handy later on. Frequently check that your agents are well armed (that means not using revolvers, unless unavoidable) and do whatever it takes to keep them alive.



The Dewhurst Parking Police demonstrate what happens to repeat offenders.



SKILLS TO PAY THE BILLS

The core eight members of Project Nemesis each have special attributes that they can draw upon throughout the missions.

Some of these are active at all times, others can be turned on from the individual menus.

For example, Toni Lewis, the "Doc", has the ability to temporarily heal individuals of the team; Karl

Wagner or "Creep" can camouflage himself in the form of another human(oid) for a period; and Nikki Jonas, "Steel", is affected by weapon hits and explosions less so than other agents.

There are other agents that become available throughout the game but have no special abilities to begin with. As their experience increases they may develop special skills. Especially if they become contaminated by nasty diseased things...

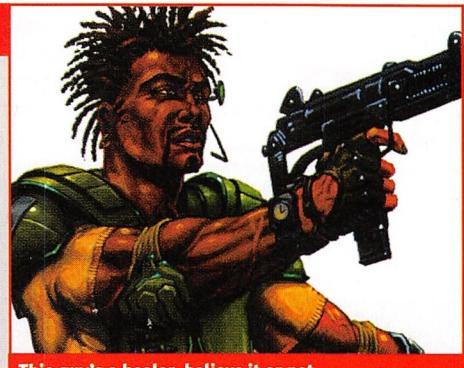
Seek and destroy!

You can see some influence of Hothouse Creations' earlier title, the admirable Gangsters (85%, PCPP #34), in Abomination. Again, you have the combination of action and organisational elements from a third-

person isometric view. The emphasis in Abomination, though, is on slick, squad-based, heavily-armed action. From a map screen of the city, you direct your troops to different events and can, at times, choose which missions to take. Essentially, the job of your squad of agents is to destroy - whatever happens to get in your way.

Squad-based action

There is a pool of squad agents, from which you select four, at the beginning of each mission in the game. A bit of forethought is needed before you attempt a mission in which agents



This guy's a healer, believe it or not.

Project

DYNAMIC TEAM CONTROL

At the completion of a mission, the surviving agents' abilities can be "upgraded". Each agent has individual attributes and you can concentrate on any of these. These abilities include accuracy, health, reactions, stealth and others. You can spread the good stuff evenly amongst your team or concentrate on just a few of your favourite agents.



The combatants hold their fire to allow a squishy mutant alien to cross the road.

"...when you replay the game, the missions appear in different order."

you send into the field: some are better suited to the task at hand than others. Certain agents have special skills, which include being able to turn items in the scenery into explosives, becoming invisible for a period or possessing great strength. These special skills are in addition to their normal weaponry. Also, varying active agents can give your wounded troops time to recuperate.

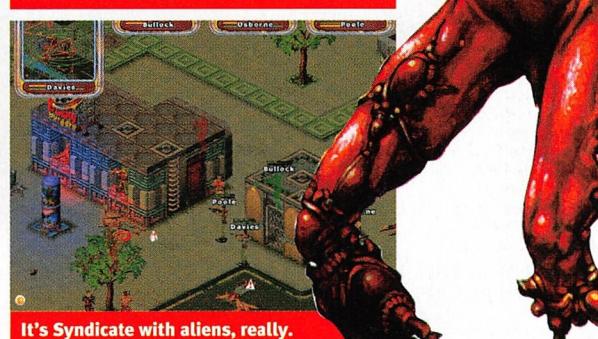
There is a good variety in missions throughout the game. You may be required to protect a civilian, activate some equipment or something similar, protect a location, ambush a vehicle or just go and blow everything up. The variation makes for some interesting and ever-changing play. A great idea is that the missions are randomly generated, so that when you replay the game, the missions appear in a different order.

It's a pity that you don't learn the particulars of a mission until after you've selected your four agents

though. If you wanted one specially skilled individual in particular, you have to quit the mission and re-select your team. This is a needless oversight and a little disappointing. The game doesn't suffer greatly though, as Abomination is more a matter of good tactics in the field and a bit of smart improvisation.

Prod-rock

The soundtrack is great with a Prodigy/rock flavour and the sound effects of organic slitherings and the screams of the enemy, your team and suffering civilians, are perfect. A great deal of Abomination's appeal is in the feel of the game and the atmosphere is just right. You know this is a shoot-everything action extravaganza - that's why it's so much fun.



Superfluous command

There are some minor blemishes in this otherwise enjoyable action-fest. On the downside, a lot of the options available to you in individual commands are fairly superfluous. In a stand-off, it's often difficult to direct your team with the level of control you'd like. Trying to get an agent to use a grenade in the midst of combat is difficult and it needn't be. Better control would have indeed been welcome.

Abomination is an above average action title for those who don't really care about the story. You can just jump in and start shooting some baddies. There's enough here that's new and different to make Abomination a game worth playing.

John Dewhurst



81

PCPP

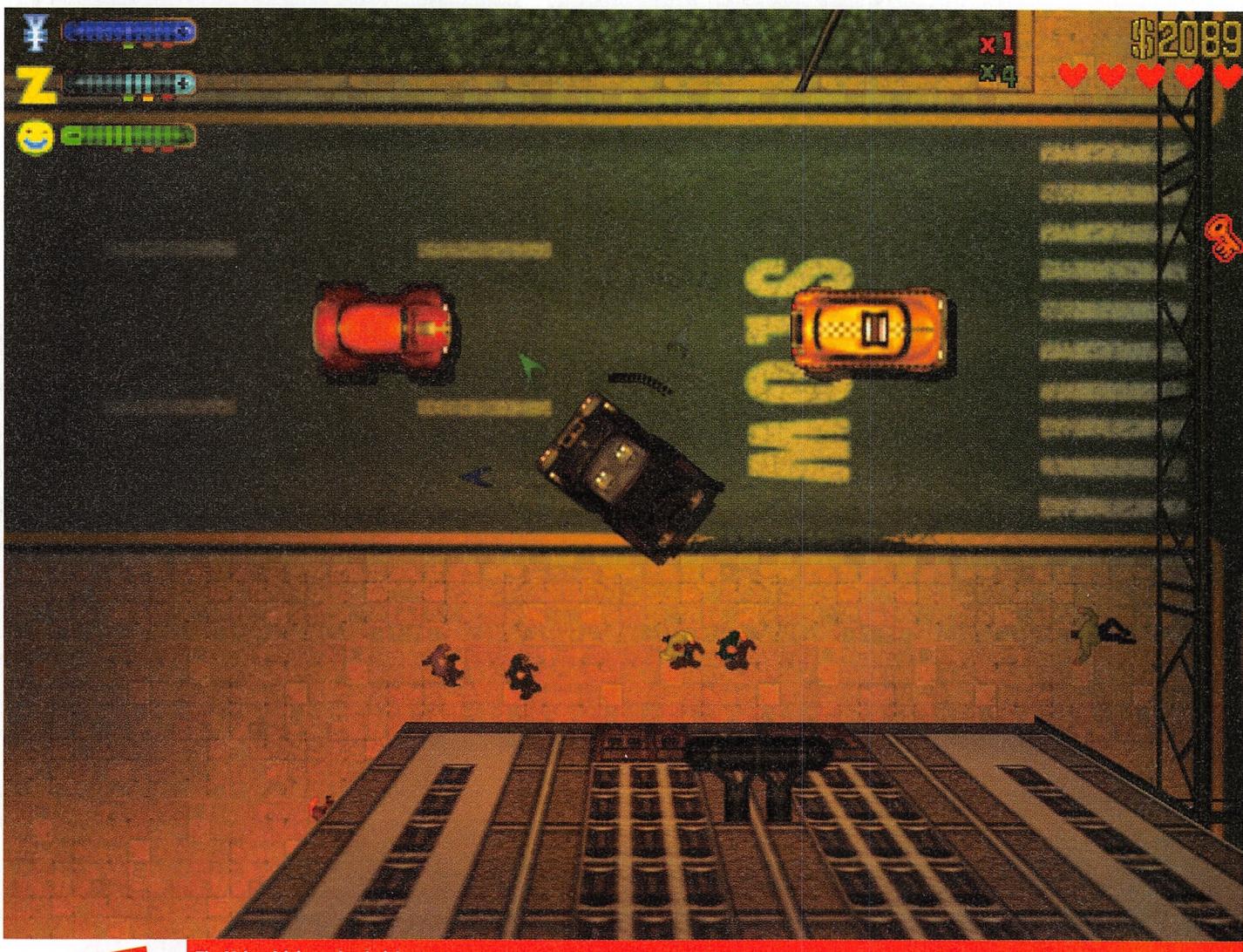
FOR: Solid, action gaming. Great atmosphere, great gore!

AGAINST: Strategy side of things is a little weak, quite similar throughout, control leave something to be desired.

Grand Theft Auto 2

•Genre: Criminal Training •Players: 1-6 •Developer: DMA Design •Publisher: Rockstar •Distributor: Jack Of All Games •Price: \$TBA •Rating: MA15+ •Available: Now
 •Need: P200, 32MB RAM, 65MB HD space, 3D Graphics Card (D3D) •Want: PII, 64MB RAM •URL: <http://www.gta2.com>

Get over it already. Grand Theft Auto is about as subversive as Australia's Most Wanted. And infinitely more enjoyable.



The Volvo driving school pick-up.

TIPS

- Watch your back homie. In the world of GTA2, no one is your friend and everyone is in the way of you getting more cash, respect and hooz. So don't be afraid to backstab, lie, cheat and steal everything you can. Remember that you're dealing with criminals here, it's not like you're stealing money from a convent. So act like Robin Hood and steal from the rich...and forget the last part of Robin's sellout motto.
- Just make sure that you remember who exactly is on your team at any stage of the game. If you find that sticking with one gang helps you more than another, kiss their ass until they're ready to stab them in the back and steal their goods.

A few years ago, a game with the title Grand Theft Auto hit the PC gaming scene. It was a simple game, featuring old-school 2D top-down gameplay. A game where you simply navigated a car around city streets and went about your daily business - that being: killing innocent pedestrians, picking up bank robbers and busting caps in police officers. Naturally, the "upstanding members of the community" were up in arms because games like this warp the minds of the youth. The game went on to be a best seller.

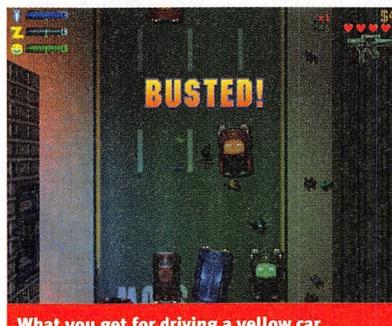
What's the moral of the story? If you want something to sell, make sure the "upstanding members of the community" have some serious moral issues with your product. Grand Theft Auto 2 is now hitting the streets and not much has changed from its predecessor, which is a very good thing.

Intelligent Gang Warfare

GTA2 has more of a story behind it than the original GTA - a game where you didn't need to know anything about the background of who you were, what you were against or even who you were allied with. You basically jumped in your car, answered phones and did the jobs that were asked of you. GTA2 is a slightly different kettle of fish. Now you've got rival gangs who are all

wanting you to do favours for them. And if you do something for one crowd, you are more than likely to seriously piss off another mob.

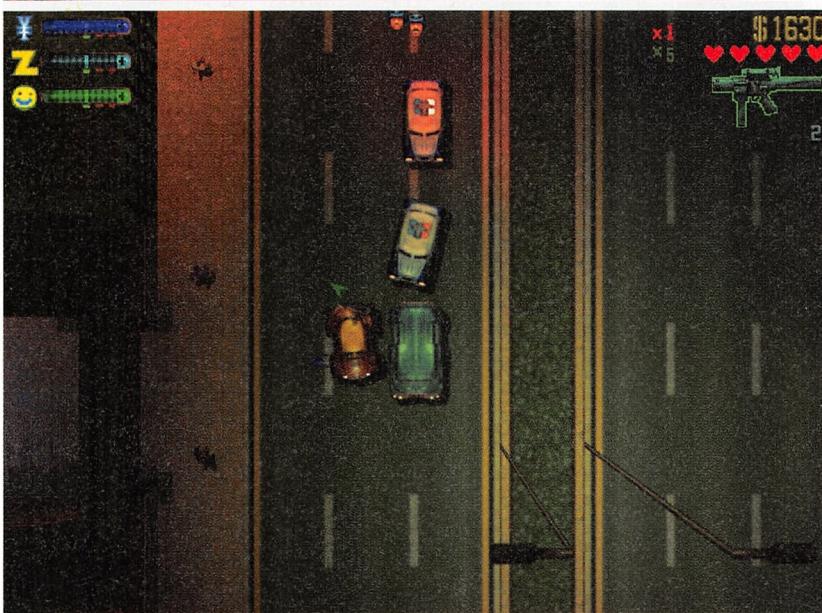
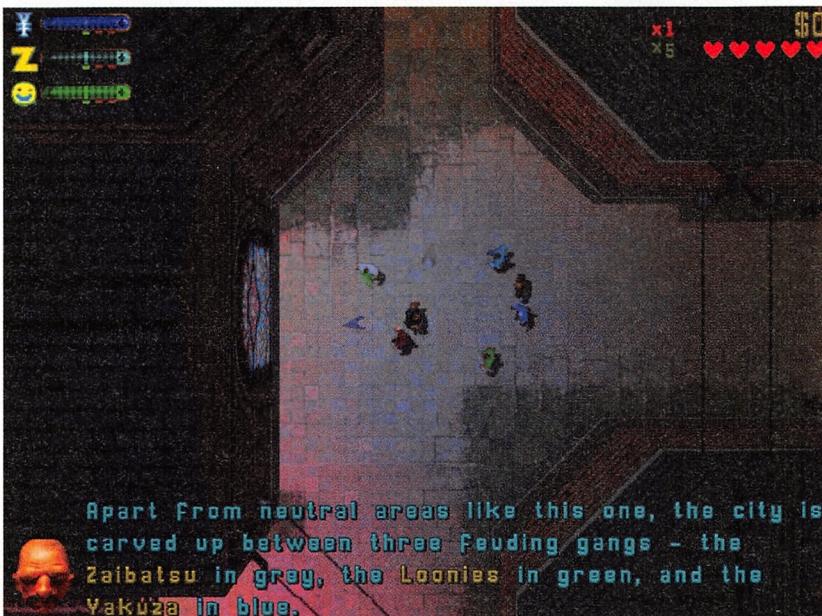
This new feature is called "Intelligent Gang Warfare", and it's what makes GTA2 a step above the original. You can now align yourself with one gang, and hope they cover your back for the entire game. Or, you can switch around your alliances like a backstabbing double-



What you get for driving a yellow car.



The PCPP captioner post-deadline.



crosser, if you so desire. For example, let's say that you start off the game by doing a few deals for the Russians. This would involve killing some members of the Yakuza and stealing and delivering some cars to the Russian headquarters. Now you've got the Russians on your side, but the Yakuza want to rip your guts out. So if you want, you could then double-cross the Russians and get the Yakuza back in your court. Or try and appease both gangs and turn them on each other.

Of course, if you keep the double-crossing up too much, you could start a full-scale gang war, which would then get the Army involved, which benefits no one. Except the government who get to flex their muscle, and that's never a wise thing to do.

Freestyle crimewave

Like any good game, GTA2 doesn't

lock you into only performing missions that are assigned to you. When you're tooling around on the streets you can go freestyle and steal some cars or shoot some civilians. Be warned though, the cops have had their AI bumped up a few notches, and if you take down a few pigs, get ready for SWAT teams and some feds to be on your tail.

GTA2's graphics have been beefed up from the original, and while it's still a simplistic overhead view, only the most hardcore polygon counters will find it a problem. The game still runs very smoothly (as you'd expect), and the lighting is absolutely awesome. The police cars look especially funky.

PCPP

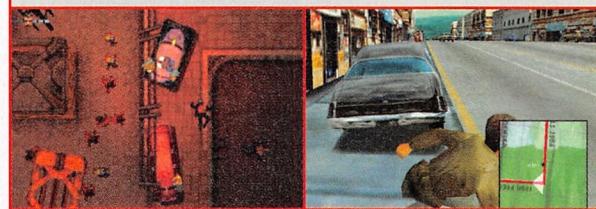
FOR: You get to be a criminal. Provides hours of excellent law-breaking gameplay.

AGAINST: Some people still won't like the 2D top-down view.

GTA2 VS DRIVER

When Driver came out a few months back, everyone was calling it the "3D GTA". This is really a pile of bollocks. Driver is the lite beer version of GTA2. Driver is the wine cooler, GTA2 is the Long Island Iced Tea. Driver is Stuart Law, GTA2 is Boonie. You get the picture.

Yes, Driver does have better graphics. But even though neither Driver nor GTA2 are "driving games", Driver is more of a racing game while GTA2 is a well-rounded action game. Oh, and Driver's main character isn't even a bad guy - he's nothing but an undercover cop pretending to be a bad dude. Sellout!



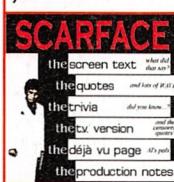
Proof that crime does pay.



"...but the Yakuza want to rip your guts out."

PLUS

www.jgeoff.com/scarface/index2.shtml
For all the information you can handle on the number one criminal ever to hit the big screen. Kids, to really have some fun, download the Scarface wav files and set it up to say "I bury those cock-a-roaches!" for every Windows event. Your parents will love you for it.



Ewan Corness

84

Microsoft's Flight Simulator

●Genre: Flight Simulation ●Players: 1-16 ●Developer: Microsoft ●Publisher: Microsoft ●Distributor: Microsoft ●Price: \$89.95 ●Rating: G ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P166, 32MB RAM, 350 HDD Space, 2xCDROM, 16bit capable videocard ●Want: PII266, 64MB RAM, 1.5gb HDD Space, 3D Graphics Card (D3D) 4xCDROM ●URL: www.microsoft.com/fs2000

You get to pilot a Concorde. Enough said.

TIPS

- When looking up radio frequencies on the in-flight map, simply copy the text required, and paste into your kneeboard for easy reference.
- Take-off in the Concorde is not as easy as it may seem. Rotate at approximately 250 IAS, and maintain an AOA of 10-15 degrees.
- Make sure to fully understand the checklist prior to jumping in any aircraft; the information may just save your virtual life.
- There are literally thousands of additional aircraft for download via the Internet; sites like www.flightsim.com and www.fs2000.com are great places to start.

Since the announcement that Microsoft was working on a sequel to their best selling Flight Simulator 98, enthusiasts the world over have been in a fit. For the MS Flight Simulator series is certainly considered the daddy of them all. With gigantic traversable distances that encompass the entire planet, to real life Jeppesen navigation information allowing any budding pilot to fly to or from any one of 20,000 real-world airfields, airstrips, and airports, not to mention heli-pads <deep breath> - Flight Sim is absolutely packed with features.

Concorde has nuthin' to do with it

Upon first seeing the game box and the supersonic Concorde emblazoned upon it, my adrenaline started running wild at the prospect of piloting the graceful bird. It also made me very anxious to get into the hot seat. But hold on buckos, or any other would-be Concorde pilot - grab a cup of coffee and take a seat (preferably in a comfy chair) as the installation alone is going to take up to an hour! The full-installation requires 1.5GB of hard drive space - which is the only real option if you plan on being a serious aviator.

After a quick nap, installation may (hopefully) be complete at which point it's time to take to the skies in any one of the eight beautifully recreated aircraft included. The newest and most

If you look close enough, you can spy the House of PCPP.



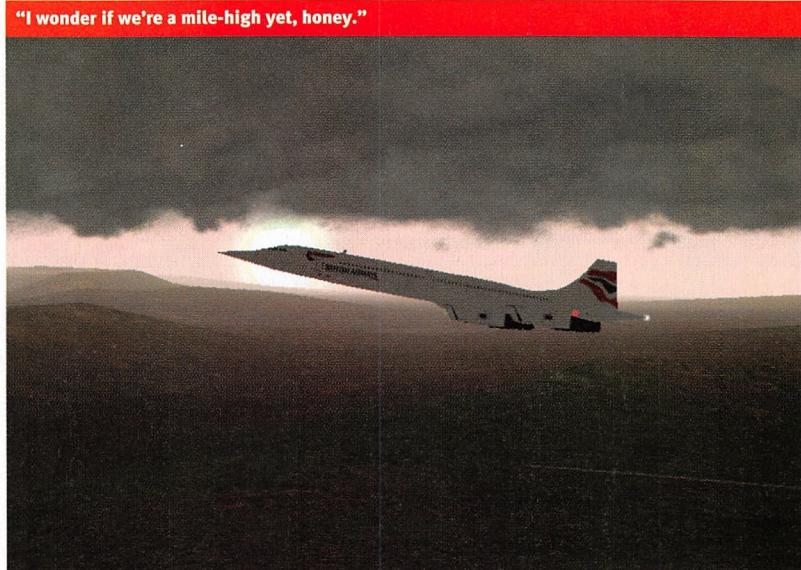
GPS

Back in the days of Flight Simulator 98, planning those international flights was a bloody nightmare. On top of maintaining global awareness, there were COM frequencies to be set, VOR radials to be calculated and NDB stations to find. When it came to calculating where and when to turn, ascend and descend, it was often more guess work than true virtual professionalism. This has all now changed, thanks to the addition of the Global Positioning

System (GPS) and an advanced in-flight map. All facets of the flight ahead can be planned to the utmost detail.

Prior to take-off, simply program the GPS with your intended course and destination, take-off, set the plane to autopilot, and there is no need to touch the controls until you hear that outer marker beep. For achieving a real sense of piloting an airliner, these new features are truly priceless.

"I wonder if we're a mile-high yet, honey."



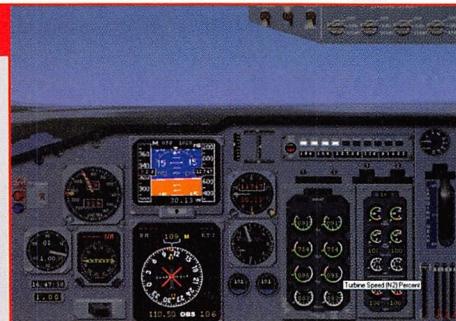
spectacular plane in the Microsoft fleet (and the one that pretty much sold FS 2000 to enthusiasts the moment it was announced) is the stunning (and aforementioned) British Airways Concorde. Be warned though: getting to grips with this girl is a tough job for even the most experienced virtual pilots.

Comprehensive

The main interface is a little difficult to get used to at first, as all options are selected via pull-down menus within the game. This seems like an odd way of doing things in a flight sim, but is a practice that Microsoft had found successful in past releases. There are options available for almost every facet of the virtual world. Changes can be made to weather, time and date, season,

visibility and wind conditions - just to mention a few. With this increased control over the simulated environment, hitting the skies in an array of interesting situations is only a few mouse-clicks away. Soar over Sydney on a moon lit night or cruise over downtown New York on a stormy winter night.

For the uninitiated, extensive tutorials and instructor guided training lessons are included. These range from the complete basics like turning the plane and playing with the throttle, to the near impossible such as landing the Boeing 777 on a stormy night in zero visibility. Additionally, once training has been completed, there is the option of taking tests to earn your private, commercial and professional virtual pilots licence, complete with



All aircraft come with photo-realistic gauges.

2000



Note the stunning photo-realistic terrain. This could be the Arc de Triumph.

"...fly to or from any one of 20,000 real-world airfields..."

No really. Get out of the house and borrow Flying High. You won't regret it.

certificate signed by Mr. Gates himself. For the real sadists out there - it can even be printed out and framed as a testament to your glory!

Satellitic data!

Graphically Flight Sim 2000 is everything expected from a sequel and more. All aircraft contain full moving parts: aerilons, landing gear, flaps and rudder - and they move according to their mechanical counterparts. In good

weather, pilots can even be seen inside the cockpit when the aircraft is viewed from an external perspective. Terrain and scenery have also undergone a major face-lift, with the incorporation of terrain elevation complete with realistic textures developed using satellite data and imagery. Additionally, in accordance with the current season selected, the textures for each location take on a seasonal flavour, be it plains of snow in winter or fields of green in spring.

to be seen, but ATIS information is still available at all major (and some minor) airports. Long overdue to the Flight Simulator series is the addition of GPS (Global Positioning System), through which any journey can be planned and executed with total precision. This, combined with a new advanced in-flight map, ensures becoming lost in the clouds is a thing of the past.

Impeccable flight dynamics

The flight dynamics depicted in Flight Simulator 2000 are the best I have ever witnessed, and flying anyone of the available aircraft is a veritable treat. Whether banking, climbing, diving or, erm... crashing, each aircraft feels absolutely convincing.

Two years ago, no one would have believed how far the simulation industry has progressed. With the continued class that jumps from every new title, Microsoft Flight Simulator 2000 continues the tradition in style.

Edward Fox



Spurts and spluttering

The audio within the sim is top notch, and all aircraft have their own authentic sound effects. From that unique rumble of a 737 sitting idle at the end of a runway prior to take-off, to the splutter and spurts of a Cessna running out of fuel, the aural quality of FS 2000 is fantastic. By utilising the advancements in 3D audio, Microsoft has managed to induce the feel that you're actually sitting in the cockpit of a real aircraft.

Unfortunately, as in previous versions, ATC (Air Traffic Control) is still nowhere

PCPP

FOR: Travel literally anywhere on earth. Immaculate flight dynamics and control over every aspect of the virtual environment.

AGAINST: Designed really only for the hard-core. Still no ATC. 1.5GB HD requirement for best performance.

PLUS

www.simflight.com/
Your one stop-shop for everything Flight Simulator



84

"And don't call me Shirley."

Jane's USAF

●Genre: Combat flight sim ●Players: 1-16 ●Developer: Jane's Combat Simulations ●Publisher: Electronic Arts ●Distributor: Electronic Arts ●Price: \$TBA ●Rating: G ●Available: Now
 ●Need: P266; 32MB RAM; 415GB HD; 4MB D3D Card ●Want: PII 350; 64MB RAM; 1145GB HD; 16MB D3D Card ●URL: www.ea.com

Fantasy meets history in this wonderfully crafted modern flight sim from Jane's.

TIPS



- Work your way through each of the training missions, and then use the mission editor to practice particular skills, such as the correct use of the various HUDs, radars, and weapon systems.
- When in flight, use the autopilot as much as you can while continually cycling through the various systems, and take every opportunity to rehearse the types of engagements forecast during the pre-mission briefing.
- Change the range of your radar on a regular basis, and try out the 360-degree cheat mode until your confidence grows.
- If you have the hardware, use the voice recognition option for time-critical actions, such as dispensing flares and chaff - be warned though, it can actually slow things down until you get the hang of it.

In another typically solid release in their combat simulations series, Jane's have managed to balance the experienced players' demand for detail with the sort of generic gameplay needed to attract casual jet jockeys. USAF serves both groups well, giving players a choice of eight aircraft to fly in operations ranging from the Vietnam War to the hypothetical defence of Germany in the near future.

Multi-configuration wonder

USAF was designed with player options in mind. As with most Jane's titles, everything can be configured to meet your needs, whether it be the aircraft, the mission parameters, or the degree of realism wanted. When you combine plenty of choice with the multiplicity of systems stacked in a modern cockpit, things can become a little daunting at first. Don't panic though - default settings are available, and you can always forget about keystrokes and use the optional voice recognition software provided! Just in case that isn't enough, the game is also supported by an excellent training package and a manual that would put most official publications to shame.

Missions-a-plenty

Training runs, single missions and campaigns are on offer, backed up by a versatile Quick Mission Editor that lets you design your own. Missions can be played in any order, with the exception of the German campaign, in which combat losses and performance have long term impact. The editor is particularly useful for practicing critical skills before launching into a campaign, with the adjustable parameters including time, range, weapons and the type of target. Regeneration of destroyed aircraft can also be specified, along with weapon reloads and starting positions.

Mission preparation is half the fun in USAF, with the Tactical Display screen providing as good an interface as you're likely to see in any sim. A scrollable



I think that stealth technology needs some work!



Nope, we can still see you.



Their idea of camouflage is much better.

mission map lets you get familiar with the target area, and you can even print your mission briefing. There's no shortage of information, with the intelligence summary listing targets and potential threats, supported by 3D models and photos to assist in recognition. Just to take it up a notch, live satellite or UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) images are presented for some missions! Weapon and equipment loadouts are also specified in the Tactical Display, and the Mission Recorder can be activated before you launch.

As a nice touch, players can visit or take control of other flights (groups of aircraft) during a mission. You don't win until all mission objectives have

been completed, so it's in your interest to be familiar with the other aircraft assigned to a mission, and to spend some time sorting out the best configuration for all flights. As critical events approach, such as the final run by the SEAD (Suppression of Enemy Air Defence) aircraft clearing the way for your strike force, USAF gives you the opportunity to take hands-on control of that part of the mission. Similarly, if your aircraft is destroyed, you can jump to another ship and carry on.

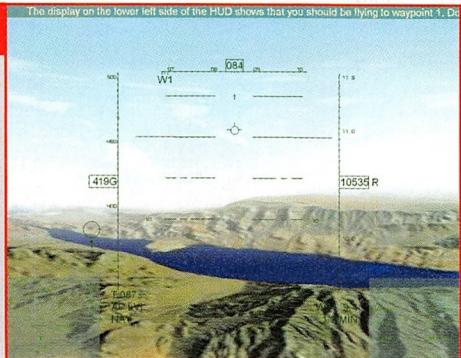
Detail freaks

Detail freaks will have a field day with this game, as tackled are HUDs, HARMs, FLIRs, MFDs, CCIPs, LGBs

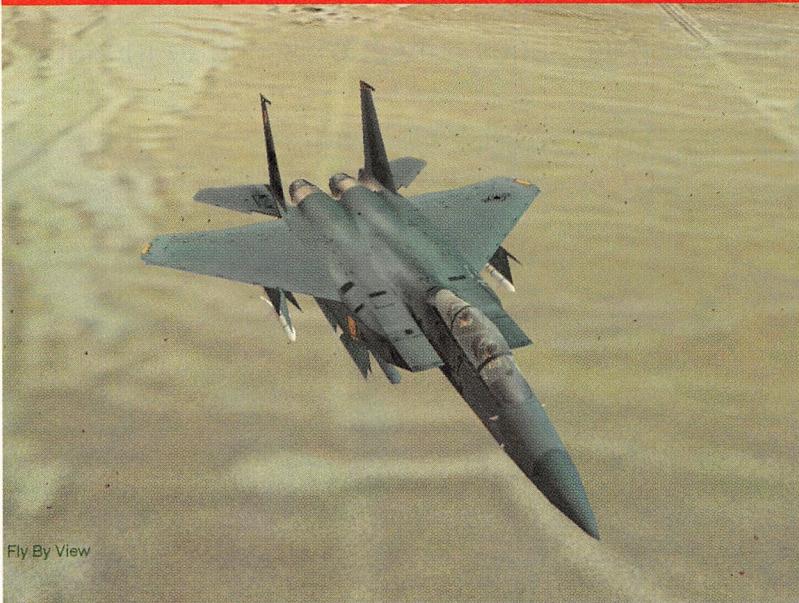
HUDS, HUDS AND MORE HUDS

HUDs (Head Up Displays) have made a remarkably simple yet decisive contribution to aerial warfare. HUDs allow pilots to keep track of critical systems while maintaining their visual watch over the battle area, by projecting the necessary information onto a glass panel in the front of the cockpit or into the helmet visor. USAF models HUDs extremely well, incorporating a bewildering array of them at the flick of a switch. HUDs are available for all key

systems, including weapons, navigation, and damage control. Although you may select a specific HUD for, say, the launch of a particular missile, certain critical data is available in all HUD views. Common data includes such things as current heading, airspeed and altitude, as well as waypoint indicators, thrust readings and pitch information. The trick is to focus on the task at hand, while staying aware of everything else. Know your HUDs!



Major Des' screencapture magic.



Where are the EPA when you need them?



"HUDs, HARMs, FLIRs, MFDs, CCIPs, LGBs..."

Too clinical

USAF flies well, although I have to admit that it doesn't inspire the sort of edge-of-the-seat excitement seen in some other sims. That's partly because Jane's have done such a faithful job of modeling the high technology combat experienced in a modern aircraft, and partly because they've tried to ease the transition from one aircraft type to another by using a common interface wherever possible. The net result is a fairly clinical, accurate simulation, that doesn't quite cut it in the atmosphere stakes. Still, this is a minor gripe considering Jane's have got it right in just about every other area.

There's no doubt that the terrific degree of configuration options will make it a winner on the multiplayer circuit, and it will play a key role in Jane's plans to create a genuine multi-platform simulation environment.

Major Des McNicholas



PLUS

www.af.mil
The United States Airforce Homepage is your best source for all things USAF. The comprehensive Image Library covers aircraft, key people, and past operations, and links are provided to the Air Force News Service - be the first in your squadron to know that the Stealth Fighter cost too much!



and MRMs (not to mention the need to be able to react to 24 different damage warnings!). Fortunately, the training missions talk new pilots through the complexities of air-to-air and air-to-ground combat, and the manual leaves nothing to chance. As you would expect, the onboard systems of a modern fighter permit an unprecedented degree of situational awareness, and Jane's have captured it well. A flick through the numerous MFD (Multi-Function

Display) screens will update you on everything from enemy locations to weapons status and local geography.

A lot of work has also gone into graphics quality in USAF, and the special effects and sound package is a step up from earlier Jane's releases. The terrain modelling really is very good, although some minor blemishes are evident at the lower levels. I was particularly impressed with the high standard of the aircraft and ground objects, supported by such a wide range of view options. Flying at night is a real buzz, due to the realistic treatment of night vision devices and the demands of instrument flying.



PCPP

FOR: Easy to master basics, with plenty of detail for the enthusiasts. Dynamic campaign structure. Configurable to the nth degree.

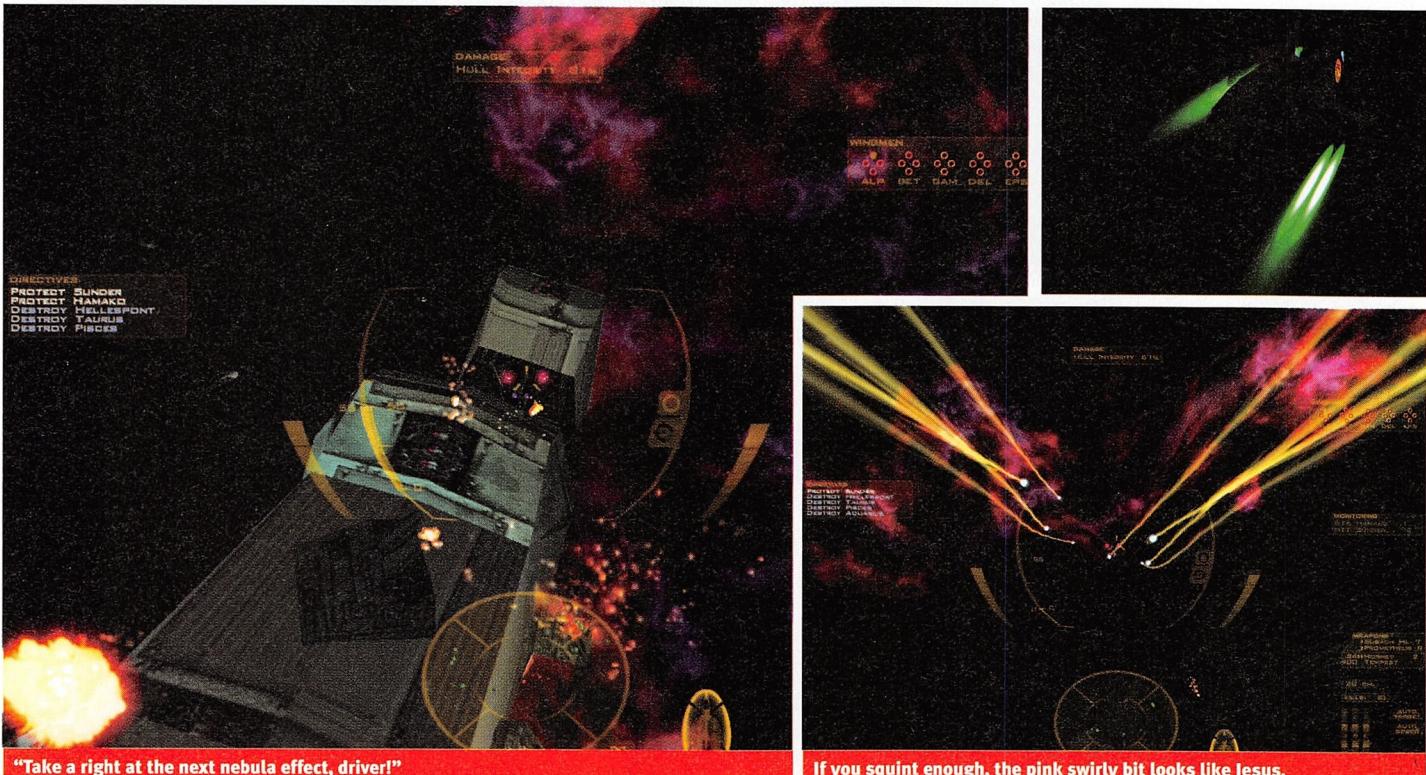
AGAINST: Could use more missions in each campaign. Despite a high degree of technical realism, it falls a little short on game atmosphere.

86

Freespace 2

● Genre: Space Flight Sim ● Players: 1-8 ● Developer: Volition ● Publisher: Interplay ● Distributor: Interplay ● Price: \$89.95 ● Rating: M15+ ● Available: Now
 ● Need: P200, 32MB RAM, 400 HDD, 8xCDROM, 3D graphics card (D3D, Glide) ● Want: P266, 64MB RAM, 3D soundcard ● URL: www.freespace2.com

Fresh from shaking off the Descent tag, the Freespace series is free to ascend to the top of the space combat genre.



TIPS

It's that time of year again, and the gaming industry is once again being flooded with the best of the best in genres far and wide. With every new release comes breathtaking visuals, immersive audio, tons of playability and that all-important value for money. Living up to, if not surpassing these standards is the eagerly awaited sequel to Volition's hugely successful Freespace: The Great War.

Three's a crowd

Freespace 2 is set thirty-two years after the original title. The great Shivan-Terran war is over, and the GTVA (Galactic Terran-Vasudan Alliance) now faces a new enemy from within its own ranks. The NTF (Neo Terran Front) is a group of GTVA officers, and their crews, who have rejected the Terran-Vasudan alliance, and vowed to destroy all Vasudans and their "weak" Terran

allies. As the civil war flares to new heights, an old threat looms on the horizon... the Shivas are back.

The front-end contains all the winning features seen in the original: take on a friend in multiplayer via the built-in interface to the Internet arena of PXO; train the reflexes with a quick stint in the simulator or just check out logistical data via the Tech room. It is however, the Campaign feature of Freespace 2 that clearly makes it a triumph, and it's in this wondrous mode of gameplay that truly draws you into the Freespace universe. Narrated with cut-scenes and in-depth mission briefings, the twists and sub-plots make it almost impossible to turn off the computer, as you are constantly left wondering, "What's going to happen next?"

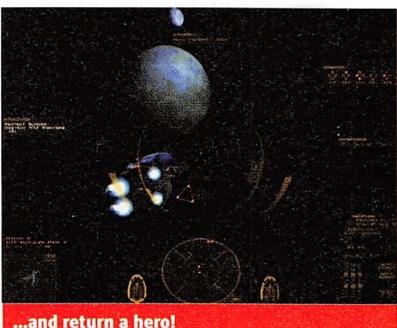
Nebula Effects

Stunning can be the only word to

describe the 1024x768 visuals depicted in Freespace 2. Explosions whack the monitor with a fantastically realistic touch, Laser and Plasma bolts sport an authentic glow, and all missiles spurt trails of gas as they vector towards their prey. Spacecraft, of which there are a staggering seventy included, are all originally modelled, and all mission backgrounds realistically promote a "You're in space" feel through planets and stars combined with psychedelic coloured nebulas that would make any hippie proud, draped across the scene. So detailed is the eye-candy that when you hit a ship with any type of laser fire, their shields shimmer and glow under the strain of the energy drain.

In all space sims, sound plays a major factor, and if not depicted correctly, can easily lead to a dull, unrealistic atmosphere. This coupled with the fact that there aren't actually

- When fighting in large battles, check your six every now and then, as the talented AI tend to sneak up on you when you're busy chasing one of their own.
- Try to maintain a minimum distance of 150 metres from your capital ship, as they now sport devastating anti-fight beam lasers, which can easily slice any ship in half.
- When the mission involves destroying a capital ship, send your wingmen in to take out the weapon systems, as this will greatly reduce the accuracy of all its weapons and make it an easy target for the bombers.
- During an intense encounter, keep an eye on the status of your shield. Should any gaps appear, quickly equalise, as one well-placed enemy missile may easily spell doom.



WHAT'S A FEW LASER BLASTS BETWEEN FRIENDS?

Finished the campaign? Looking for that extra challenge? Look no further than the PXO online Freespace arena. Through this amazingly well developed online service, any Freespace 2 owner with an Internet connection can sign-up and participate in some serious online combat. All scores, results and medals gained during each mission are tallied and ranked against other Freespace pilots, viewable

via the web at www.squadwar.com.

Additionally, there is the option of joining the ranks one of over three hundred established Freespace 2 squads to fight as a team in the Freespace 2 Squad War league, an online competition in which squads from all over the world battle for star systems in a fantasy universe governed and co-ordinated by the friendly chaps at PXO.



In space no one can see you shit your pants.

any real space ships with lasers from which to sample the effects makes it all the more difficult, and leads developers primarily to guess work. Well, if the in-game audio apparent in Freespace 2 is anything to go by, we could easily be forgiven for thinking Volition had sampled the real thing! From the roar of those eye-pleasing explosions to the blasts of a laser beam on the hull of a ship, all noise adds dramatically to the immersiveness of Freespace 2. Fly alongside a capital ship as a suckerfish does to a shark, and the cockpit becomes inundated with low "Starship Enterprise"-like hum. Additionally commendable is the soundtrack, which varies according to the mood of the current situation.

Behemoths and Goliaths

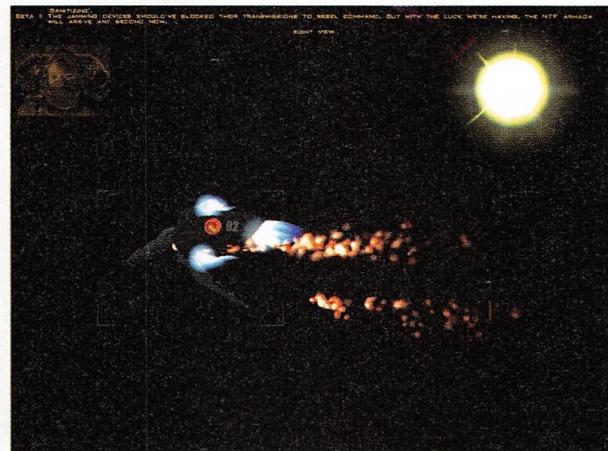
Freespace 2 boasts some of the most impressive capital ships ever seen since



What a way to go.

Star Wars: from proportionately-sized cruisers sizing a humble five hundred metres to super destroyer behemoths measuring in at an unbelievable twelve kilometres! The true size of one of these monsters becomes apparent when viewed from a distance, as the explosions of fighters seem pinhead-sized in comparison. As daunting a task as taking out one of these goliaths may be, any friendly giants in the immediate vicinity can easily be used to your advantage as their powerful array of onboard weapons is very capable of destroying any unwanted enemies locked on your six!

Gameplay in Freespace 2 is extremely similar to other titles of the space sim genre. With no noticeable inertia to speak of, piloting a GTVA fighter or bomber doesn't so much require a degree in space combat, as it demands reflexes. Dog-fighting in the midst of a sixty ship battle is an extremely challenging and immensely fun experience. Quite often there is literally so much going on that it's quite easy to lose track of where you are, making extensive understanding of a

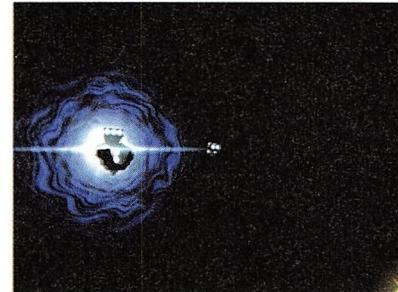


"... destroyer behemoths measuring at 12 kilometres!"

fighters radar display a must. With over fifty available commands, you can do anything from assign a wingman to destroy the communications subsystem on an enemy ship, to targeting the last turret of a capital ship that fired upon you!

Weighing up against the competition at the time (X-Wing vs Tie-Fighter, Wing Commander, etc), Freespace: The Great War with all its impressive features blew the competition apart and assumed the top spot. And now, one year on, Volition in conjunction with Interplay have secured the number one position yet again with Freespace 2.

Edward Fox



PCPP

FOR: Gorgeous visuals, immersive storyline, fantastic effects and a situational soundtrack. Definitely the most atmospheric title in the genre.

AGAINST: Cooking, cleaning, eating, sleeping... lots of perfect Freespace 2 time wasted!

95

Shadow Company: LEFT FOR DEAD

●Genre: Real-time Tactical Action Game ●Players: 1-8 ●Developer: Sinister Games ●Publisher: Ubi Soft ●Distributor: Ubi Soft ●Price: TBA ●Rating: ----- ●Available: Now
 ●Need: Win95, P223 MMX, 32MB RAM, 400MB HD, 8x CD ROM, DirectX supported 3D accelerator card, sound card ●Want: PII 300, 64MB RAM ●URL: www.sinistergames.com/games.html

Being left for dead when you haven't actually passed away can be downright insulting.

REVIEW Ever felt betrayed? Maybe your beloved decided you weren't hip enough any more, or maybe your favourite football club was just booted from the national competition. Well, if you've ever wanted to visit foul and heavily armed revenge on those who've wronged you, here's a way to release that anger in a way which won't get you arrested.

Shadow Company concerns a group of mercenaries who have been awfully betrayed by their employers, Granite Corporation. Sent to attack a particular target, they find that they have been set up - of the two-hundred mercenaries that land, only a handful survive. You've been Left for Dead. Now it's payback time!

Strategy-combat

Shadow Company is basically a combat action game, with attention to more detailed elements like statistics. So we're heading into strategy territory here. First off, before each mission commences, your job is to assemble and equip your team. This means hiring the right hands for the job, buying enough equipment for their (and your) needs, and outfitting them effectively (giving them stuff they can actually use). You want to be careful who you pick as well, since each mercenary has different strengths and weaknesses.

If you want to do some snooping (and the game will require this), you'll need to have someone who has excellent stealth and infiltration skills. The same goes for weaponry as well. It's rather pointless giving a heavy weapon to someone who can't use it. If you're splitting your team into smaller groups, you have to make sure they're well balanced too. Also, when there are items and weapons that can be picked up, you want to make sure you've got someone who can use them.

Balancing act

In the missions, you assume an omnipotent-ish overhead viewpoint. From here you direct the troops to do as you wish. There is the standard array of features: individual and group control, crouching, lying down, standing, and changing weapons. You also have option of driving vehicles and boats. The troop interface is pretty good and control of the mercenaries is well up to par. The problem I had with the

The facility at the Sunnydale Resort had deteriorated since the Underwood's first visit all those Xmas' ago...



“..pointless giving a heavy weapon to someone who can’t use it.”

whole system was actually controlling your view at the same time as your soldiers. The camera is controlled by the numpad, with various zooms and pans available. It's not terrible but it'd be nice if it was a little more intuitive. The whole thing ends up being a balancing act - especially in those furious combat situations where you attempt to direct your squad and actually keep a good view on the action! It's a minor point but it really could have been a bit better.

John Rambo

That said, this is still an extremely playable game. Shadow Company has great character (lots of bravado and stern faces) and offers solid action. Best



PLUS

www.pacificnet.net/gamelan/shadowtheater.html
 Learn all about traditional shadow theatre from Bali and Java. Far better than "deformed rabbit"!



of all, there is ample opportunity to improvise, as the missions are basically map scenarios. It's fairly linear, but has enough to keep things interesting. Shadow Company should satisfy the combat action fans out there. So if you've worn out your copy of Rambo, try venting your frustrated inner-mercenary tendencies here.

John Dewhurst

PCPP

FOR: Nice action and atmosphere, lots of things to do, hours of extremely prejudiced killing ahead!

AGAINST: Iffy camera controls that detract from the game itself and some troublesome menus.

74

SU-27 Flanker 2.0

● Genre: Fighter Jet Sim ● Players: 1-12 ● Developer: Strategic Simulations Inc. ● Publisher: Mindscape ● Distributor: GT Interactive ● Price: \$89.95 ● Rating: M15+ ● Available: Now
 ● Need: P200, 32MB RAM, 350 HDD Space, 4xCDROM ● Want: PII350, 64MB RAM, 350 HDD Space, 3D Graphics Card, 16xCDROM ● URL: www.flanker2.com

A Made in Russia simulation of their top-line combat aircraft. Sexy stuff!



The smoke is modelled on real Russian fire.

With a host of sophisticated flight sims available these days, the latest from Mindscape: SU-27 Flanker 2.0, is clearly the product of a dedicated group of flight sim developers. The first in the series was famed for featuring one of the great flight models ever, although the spartan interface and complete lack of campaign missions underlined the focus on dynamic realism over all else.

The real thing

The setting for the sequel; Flanker 2.0, is the Crimean Peninsula, which is currently fraught by the Russian-Ukrainian war. This allows the addition of sea-based operations via the Kuznetsov class Russian aircraft carrier. Flight options include an extensive instructor guided training program which fully encompasses all aspects of flying the SU-33 Flanker, the choice of over 30 single scenario missions, and a fully-fledged campaign. This campaign feature of Flanker 2.0 is extremely mechanical in nature, and lacks those immersive effects like pre-mission briefings and video cut-scenes.

Piloting the SU-27 Flanker takes some learning - this is no USAF-style electric wonder jet! Yet once accomplished is an amazing experience. The satisfying thrill of flying a plane built to an entirely different design philosophy is available only from Flanker 2.0. Like driving a car without power steering, the Flanker's controls become sluggish at low speeds, but it will keep flying long after western jets would stall and fall. Dogfighting and even basic air combat manoeuvres require an all-new approach.

A different world

In comparison to flight sims built around western aircraft, Flanker's avionics are of a considerably primitive standard. CRTs are non-existent within the SU-27 cockpit, and the primary modes of combat are all manipulated via the HUD. You may not like this much if you've just stepped out of the



The Russian Airforce's Annual BBQ went horribly wrong.



"...mechanical in nature..."

from the immaculately rendered terrain to the towers of smoke that spew forth from chimneys. This trend also extends to both the AI aircraft, with fully animated control surfaces and landing gear. There are also different paint schemes, of which there are six to choose - including the colours of the Russian national aerobatic team!

No movies...

Flanker 2.0 is a fantastic sim in that it provides a perspective of the jet fighter world unlike any other sim. Most features are of a high quality and you'll need to be serious about your simming to get the most out of it. Beware though, if you crave the usual EA-style fluff like cinematic cut-scenes you'll end up wondering what the point is. This is an old-school combat flight sim for old-school simmers, if you're one of those you'll get a lot out of Flanker 2.0.

Edward Fox

PLUS

<http://aeroweb.lucia.it/rap/RAP.html>

Russian Aviation Page;
Fancy a flight in the real thing?

[Fly the Legendary MiG-21!](#)

[RUSSIAN AVIATION PAGE](#)

Read news, reviews, articles, answers to frequently asked questions and lots to do in the Russian aviation community.

Links to other sites, news, forums, and more.

Join the mailing list.

Digitally signed and encrypted versions of RussianAviation Page.

Address, reports and press releases on Russian Aviation Page.

cockpit of a Falcon 4.0 F-16D, but the challenge of flying an authentically modelled Russian combat aircraft is gratifying on a different level.

The graphics engine in Flanker 2.0 has been completely re-built, offering breathtaking effects, and are some of the best I have seen in a jet fighter simulation! All locations, assuming the graphical options are set to a reasonable level, are modelled in extraordinary detail. Cruising below 500' is an experience filled with variable eye candy,

FOR: Some of the best graphics ever seen in the genre. It's an original concept.
Features exemplary flight dynamics.

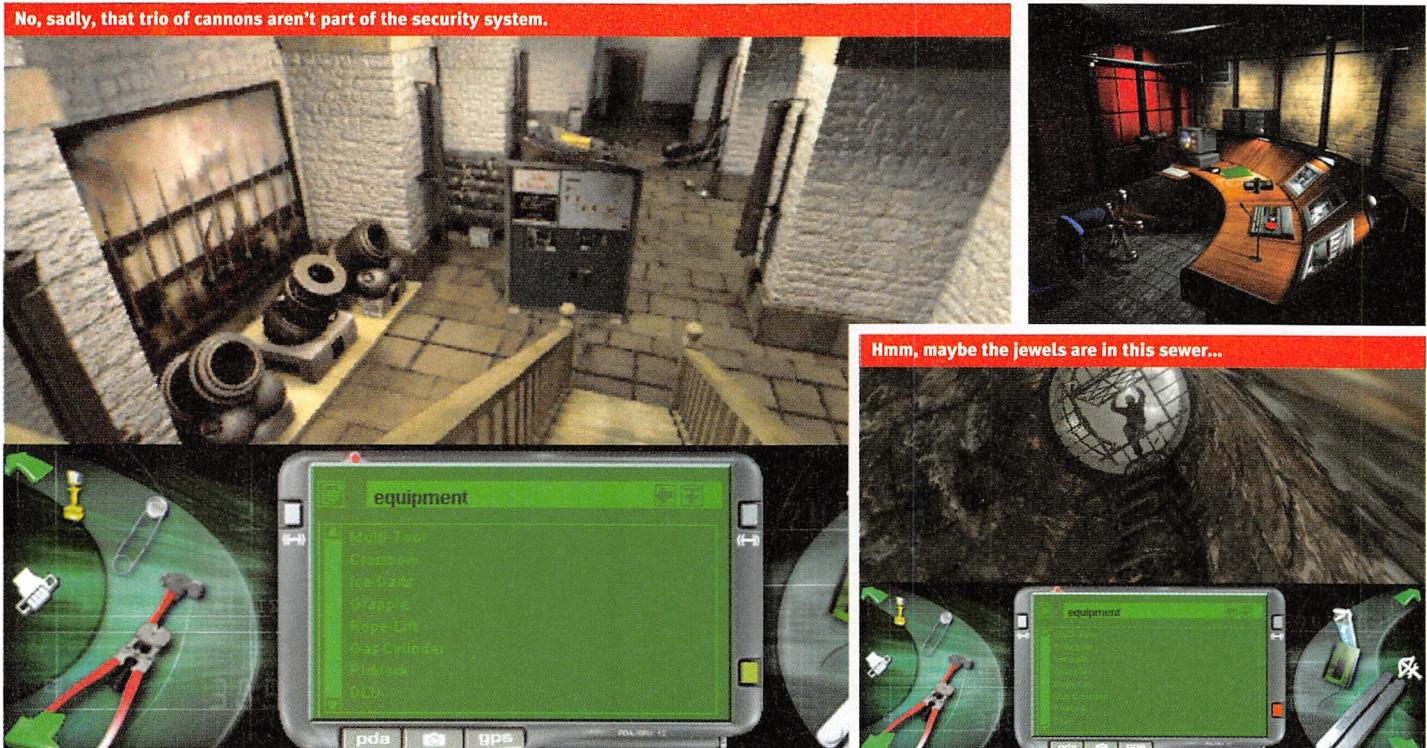
AGAINST: Pre and post mission briefings are dull. It lacks immersion.

83

Traitor's Gate

● Genre: Adventure ● Players: 1 ● Developer: Daydream ● Publisher: Daydream ● Distributor: Hilad ● Price: \$TBA ● Rating: TBA ● Available: Now
 ● Need: P100, 32MB RAM, 100MB HDD, 8xCD ● Want: P166, 64MB RAM ● URL: www.traitorsgate.com

Suggestions that you "steal this game" might be a little wide of the mark.



Whatever the quality of Traitor's Gate it's nevertheless pleasing to see a game step outside the traditional boundaries of adventure game narrative. You won't find any hint of cheeky elves, grumpy dragons nor wizened wizards here; neither do hard-boiled detectives, comedy nerd guys or sexy space babes make an appearance. The scenario of Daydream Software's point-and-click tale is resolutely grounded in the real world. Well, kind of.

Covert operation

Someone is about to steal the British Crown Jewels from the Tower of London and it's up to you to stop them. Rather than adopt a gung-ho approach and go in all guns blazing in a bid to halt such treason, it's been decided by your superiors that a covert operation would prove far more effective. You work for a US government sponsored counter-espionage unit, you see, and as the suspected perpetrator is likewise American, the less the Brits know about the whole affair, the better. So, undercover, you must enter the Tower (disguised as a tourist), find the Jewels, replace them with a replica and get back out while the security remains unaware.

Think Thief, but with less killing (in fact, you're forbidden to permanently harm anyone) and more point-and-

..a level of suspense that's rare amongst other games.."

clicking, and you're close to the type of experience Traitor's Gate offers. The interface borrows from past adventures like the latter Zork games and most of Cryo's recent output. Pre-rendered transitions escort you between locations, while at each point you have the freedom to view the surroundings through 360 degrees. It's an effective solution that allows for a level of visual detail unattainable via on-the-fly 3D engines, but the stifling lack of movement drags before too long. Also, the atmosphere is diminished by the paltry view area, taking up as it does a mere half of the screen with the rest consumed (unnecessarily, it must be said) by your inventory. Still, it's definitely an improvement over the similar system used by Southpeak in their turgid FMV adventures.

Equipment confusion

You begin with a few items whose functions are fairly obvious, but only a

short while into the mission you are basically handed the rest of the objects needed to complete the game. As you might well imagine, the only conceivable reaction to this occurrence is bewilderment. Rather than gradually introducing the player to the various pieces of equipment (including such everyday items as grappling hooks, ice darts, an audio sensor, gas cylinders, a crossbow and a digital loop unit), which would allow ample time to consider their possible uses, Daydream have instead opted to flood too much information far too quickly. It also means there are fewer surprises down the line. Slightly better pacing would have resulted in a far more accessible and compelling game.

Traitor's Gate is not a game to be taken lightly. Although often extremely difficult, it does manage to evoke a level of suspense that's rare amongst other games of the genre. The much slower pace will require a period of acclimatisation, but I imagine any fan of Thief ought to find this an enjoyable diversion while waiting for The Metal Age. Of course, it's a must for quality-starved adventure gamers.

David Wildgoose

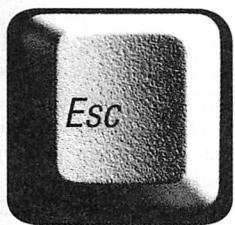
PLUS
www.toweroflondontour.com/
 Take a tour of the Tower. But do it before you play the game, in case it gives you any funny ideas.
The Tower of London Virtual Tour

PCPP

FOR: An original concept that succeeds through some genuinely clever and suspenseful design.

AGAINST: Anti-immersive graphics engine. High difficulty. Poorly paced.

78



THE RAT RACE

RACE YOUR RIVALS INSTEAD.

JOIN WIREPLAY, THE ONLINE GAMING NETWORK THAT ALLOWS YOU
TO TEST YOUR SKILL AGAINST OTHER MEMBERS
ON DAYTONA, QUAKE AND GOLF, AS WELL AS CHESS.

LEAVE THE REAL WORLD BEHIND FOR AWHILE.
VISIT WWW.WIREPLAY.COM.AU
AND STOP PLAYING WITH YOURSELF.

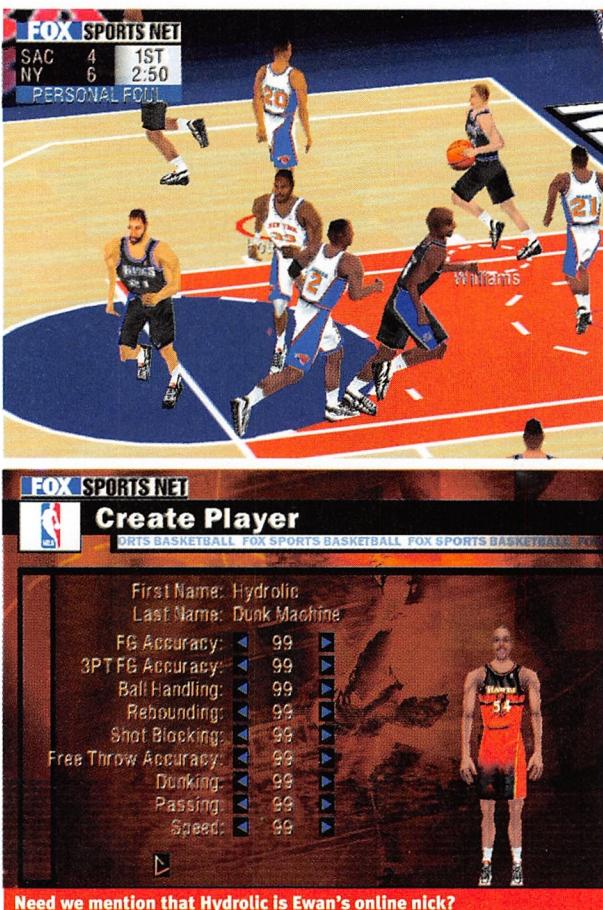
Wireplay is a registered trademark of British Telecommunications plc and is operated exclusively in Australia by Telstra Corporation Ltd. ACN 051 775 556. All product names are the property of their respective owners.



Fox Sports NBA 2000

● Genre: NBA Sim ● Players: 1-4 ● Developer: Radical Entertainment ● Publisher: Activision ● Distributor: Activision ● Price: \$TBA ● Rating: G ● Available: Now
 ● Need: P166, 32MB RAM ● Want: PII, 64MB RAM, 3D Graphics Card ● URL: www.radical.ca/fox_basketball/

In a first, we'll recommend watching the TV version instead.



Need we mention that Hydrolie is Ewan's online nick?

Fox Sports have been putting their stamp of sporting excellence on a few games in the last few years, however none of them have been all that memorable. Fox Sports NBA 2000 had the potential to be the one game that broke Fox free from the mediocrity, but instead it's stapled the word "Fox" alongside the word "disaster".

Being the King Of Basketball(tm) I get to review almost every game that features a bright orange ball, on all platforms. When I reviewed this game for a console magazine, I made the statement "They've (Radical Entertainment, the developers of the game) tried to do way too much too soon, and the poor ol' PlayStation just can't cope". I said this thinking that maybe on the PC, with the right hardware, this game had heaps of potential. Unfortunately, the gameplay problems are still there, and all that the PC version offers is sharper visuals.

A total dunk

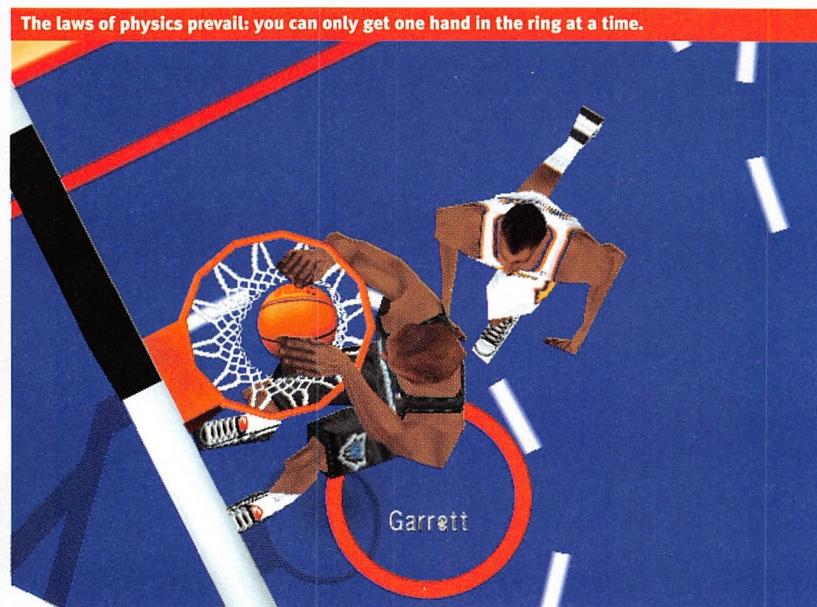
Basically, the main problem with Fox Sports NBA 2000 is that the players are just way too slow to respond to any commands you give them. And when



PCPP

FOR: It's just like watching a Fox Sports NBA telecast.

AGAINST: The gameplay is atrocious, not enough options.



"This game isn't a total write-off though..."

they do respond, they don't act like a basketball player should. For instance, if an opposing player gets past his defender and starts to head towards the basket, you can switch to your centre and try to block the player's shot. However, instead of jumping up to try and get a piece of the ball, your guy will just lamely leap in the air, do nothing in the way of actual defence, and then all you'll get to see is the ball going through the hoop.

Another example is on offence: you can basically stroll to within a metre of the basket, hit shoot, and your player will dunk it - even if there are three defenders standing in front of him. Yes, dunking is a lot of fun - but primarily because it takes a lot of skill to perform.

Doc & Popa

The game isn't a total write-off though, especially in regards to the overall game presentation and the commentary. Visually, the players and courts aren't that great, but the look of the game, in terms of it resembling a Fox Sports telecast, is very well done. Before each game there is a laser light show and the home team is introduced, just like in the NBA. Greg Popa and

Doc Rivers (what a pair of names, eh?) also do a nice job of calling the game, especially when Rivers uses his in-depth NBA knowledge to give the user some insight into the players and team they're using.

NBA madness

It's obvious that Radical have tried to make this an all-encompassing Fox Sports basketball experience. It seems though, that they haven't realised that while a whole lot of flash and pizzazz might get people to tune their televisions to watch Fox Sports, the world of gaming needs an all-important ingredient called GAMEPLAY. This one is only for the true (and freaky) NBA fans, or even scarier, die-hard Fox Sports fans.

Ewan Corness



56

DO YOU ACCEPT THE MISSION?
TOWER OF LONDON



traitors gate

DO YOU ACCEPT THE
MISSION?

\$79⁹⁵

A realistic game where you, as a Pentagon officer, have been assigned the task of retrieving the British Crown Jewels from the Tower of London before the real thieves get them and without the Tower security catching you!

MISSION EXPERIENCE

Traitors Gate is a mission firmly rooted in realism, where the location, target and challenge are all drawn from the actual Tower of London. Without being seen or heard and leaving no trace, you, agent Raven, must remove the British Crown Jewels. To succeed you must out-fox both the security personnel and the multi-million pound surveillance system protecting the Jewels.

PICTURES

DEPT	AGENT NO	AGENT CODE NAME	LOCATION
PIAD	031-1	RAVEN	TOWER OF LONDON

MISSION:

traitors gate

4 CD ROM SET WIN/MAC

Harvey Norman
THE GAMING SPECIALISTS

GameS U Play

SYDNEY METRO • AUBURN SUPERSTORE • BALGOWLAH SUPERSTORE • BLACKTOWN • CAMPBELLTOWN • CARINGBAH SUPACENTA • CHATSWOOD CHASE • GORDON CENTRE • LIVERPOOL MEGACENTA • MOORE PARK SUPACENTA • PENRITH • WILEY PARK **NSW COUNTRY** ARMIDALE • BATHURST • COFFS HARBOUR • DENILQUIN • DUBBO • ERINA • GRAFTON • INVERELL • LISMORE • MAITLAND • MOREE • MUDGEES • NEWCASTLE SUPERSTORE • NOWRA • ORANGE • PARKES • PORT MACQUARIE • TAMWORTH • TAREE • WAGGA WAGGA • WARRAWONG • YOUNG **ACT** FYSHWICK • WODEN PLAZA **BRISBANE METRO** ASPLEY OPEN 7 DAYS • CARINDALE • EVERTON PARK OPENS NOVEMBER • MT GRAVATT • OXLEY • GOLD COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • NOOSA HEADS OPENS NOVEMBER • TWEED HEADS SOUTH OPEN 7 DAYS **QUEENSLAND COUNTRY** SUNSHINE COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • BUNDABERG • CAIRNS OPEN 7 DAYS • GLADSTONE OPEN 7 DAYS • MACKAY • ROCKHAMPTON NORTH • TOOWOOMBA • TOWNSVILLE **MELBOURNE SUPERSTORES** • OPEN 7 DAYS • DANEDONG • GREENSBOROUGH PLAZA • MARIBYRNONG • MOORABBIN • NUNAWADING • PRESTON **VICTORIA COUNTRY** • OPEN 7 DAYS • ALBURY • BALLARAT • BENDIGO • GEELONG • MILDURA • SHEPPARTON • TRARALGON • WARRNAMBOOL **ADELAIDE - SOUTH AUSTRALIA** ENFIELD OPENS NOVEMBER • MARION OPEN MON-SAT **WESTERN AUSTRALIA** • ALBANY • BUNBURY • BUSSELTON • CANNINGTON • GERALDTON • JOONDALUP NOW OPEN • KALGOORlie • KARRATHA • O'CONNOR NOW OPEN • OSBORNE PARK • PORT HEDLAND • PORT KENNEDY **NORTHERN TERRITORY** • DARWIN OPENS NOVEMBER **TASMANIA** • OPEN 7 DAYS • HOBART CITY • GLENorchy • ROSNY • LAUNCESTON • BURNIE • DEVONPORT • ULVERSTONE Some goods may not be on show or available at each Harvey Norman Franchised store.

Madden 2000

● Genre: Big bloke football sim ● Players: 1-4 ● Developer: EA Sports ● Publisher: EA Sports ● Distributor: EA Sports ● Price: \$TBA ● Rating: G ● Available: Now
 ● Need: P133, 32MB RAM, 30MB HDD ● Want: PII, 64MB RAM, 100MB HDD, 3D Graphics Card (D3D or Glide), gamepad ● URL: www.easports.com

Big hits and huge guts. It could only be a Madden game.



Fair enough. I'll concede that American football (or Gridiron as it's otherwise known) isn't exactly hot property here in Australia. We're more of the easy-to-comprehend Rugby (or Rules) lineage. Each to their own though, right? But when it comes to sports-cum-game adaptations, American football absolutely puts Rugby to shame and gives Aussie Rules a good run for its money.

This is because as a sports sim, there's just so much more to do in American football. You control the offense, the defence, the kicking teams, the special teams, etc. There are pauses to plan your next play strategy, and of course, ample opportunity to try out some different ones. And with Madden 2000, the football sim has finally come of age.

Play-by-play call

Madden 2000, as it stands, is an almost perfect football gaming experience. The EA team have truly excelled with their presentation of Madden this year. The new player animations are fantastic, and give a tangible sense of fluidity to the game. You will now see receivers reach out and make that one handed catch, or stop in their tracks, jump up and save a potential play disaster. Players now also better look the part - with 300-pound jocks absolutely dwarfing their smaller team mates.

...see receivers make that one handed catch...

More importantly, the AI is much more balanced this time around. The running game will actually yield some yardage, and the passing game is much less generous (with interceptions great in frequency). Hoping to win the game on Hail Mary after Hail Mary will bring disappointing results - Madden 2000 encourages a far more realistic approach to playing the game. Once you start understanding the game and begin a much more balanced campaign of running and passing, Madden becomes a nail-biting football simulation that'll have you just as enthralled as the real thing. And you will start yelling and screaming at the computer during the proceedings.

What the...?

Considering gridiron isn't exactly simple stuff - why haven't EA included a generous tutorial system to help introduce newcomers to the gridiron experience? It's a hard enough game to



comes to grips with as an observer, but as a coach (or the person controlling the action), gridiron can take on a particularly mystifying quality. Even for semi-experienced players, making sense of the many plays and formations (especially defensive ones) will take a lot of perseverance and patience. Couple this with a terrible menu interface (less excusable when you consider the number of years EA have had to perfect one) and you've got a sim that is intimidating at best and off-putting at the worst.

Which is a shame, as Madden 2000 is an exceptional American football experience. It looks, feels and plays beautifully (official NFL backing plays a hand in this - this game features the official rosters, schedules, teams, players and stadiums). It also has enough depth to keep you entranced like a mad football hooligan for years. Or at least till Madden 2001 comes out.

March "The Bear" Stepnik

PLUS

<http://www.yack.com/Broadcast.com/165002945.html>
 The Pat Summerall Show
 Bugger Madden for an over-rated football legend - Pat Summerall is the true god of football commentary. As this webcast will surely testify.



FOR: Detailed player animation and a comprehensive treatment of the NFL. Fantastic commentary provided by Madden and Pat Summerall.

AGAINST: Retarding menu interface and a steep learning curve. Basic tutorial not up to scratch.

PCPP

84

TEST YOUR SKILLS AS

007

GameS UPlay

TOMORROW NEVER DIES

\$ 79.95 each

Tomorrow Never Dies (MA15+).

As suave secret agent 007, employ your cunning wit and high-tech gadgets to survive multiple levels of espionage based on exciting situations from the blockbuster film.

TOMORROW NEVER DIES

TOMORROW NEVER DIES

TOMORROW NEVER DIES

Harvey Norman

THE COMPUTER SPECIALISTS

SYDNEY METRO • AUBURN SUPERSTORE • BALGOWLAH SUPERSTORE • BLACKTOWN • CAMPBELLTOWN • CARINGBAH SUPACENTA • CHATSWOOD CHASE • GORDON CENTRE • LIVERPOOL MEGACENTA • MOORE PARK SUPACENTA • PENRITH • WILEY PARK **NSW COUNTRY** • ARMIDALE • BATHURST • COFFS HARBOUR • DENILQUIN • DUBBO • ERINA • GRAFTON • WARRAWONG • YOUNG **ACT** • FYSHWICK • WODEN PLAZA **BRISBANE METRO** • ASPLEY OPEN 7 DAYS • CARINDALE • EVERTON PARK OPENS DECEMBER • MT GRAVATT • OXLEY • GOLD COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • NOOSA HEADS OPENS NOVEMBER • TWEED HEADS SOUTH OPEN 7 DAYS **QUEENSLAND COUNTRY** • SUNSHINE COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • BUNDABERG • CAIRNS OPEN 7 DAYS • GLADSTONE OPEN 7 DAYS • MACKAY • ROCKHAMPTON NORTH • TOWOOOMBA • TOWNSVILLE **MELBOURNE SUPERSTORES** • OPEN 7 DAYS • DANDENONG • GREENSBOROUGH PLAZA • MARIBYRNONG • MOORABBIN • NUNAWADING • PRESTON **VICTORIA COUNTRY** • OPEN 7 DAYS • ALBURY • BALLARAT • BENDIGO • GEELONG • MILDURA • SHEPPARTON • TRARALGON • WARRNAMBOOL **ADELAIDE - SOUTH AUSTRALIA** • ENFIELD OPENS DECEMBER • MARION OPEN MON-SAT **WESTERN AUSTRALIA** • ALBANY • BUNBURY • BUSSELTON • CANNINGTON • GERALDTON • JOONDALUP NOW OPEN • KALGOORLIE • KARRATHA • O'CONNOR NOW OPEN • OSBORNE PARK • PORT HEDLAND • PORT KENNEDY The computer products in this advertisement may not be on display in Karratha franchised store. **NORTHERN TERRITORY** • DARWIN OPENS NOVEMBER **TASMANIA** • OPEN 7 DAYS • HOBART CITY • GLENorchy • ROSNY • LAUNCESTON • BURNIE • DEVONPORT • ULVERSTONE Some goods may not be on show or available at each Harvey Norman Franchised store.

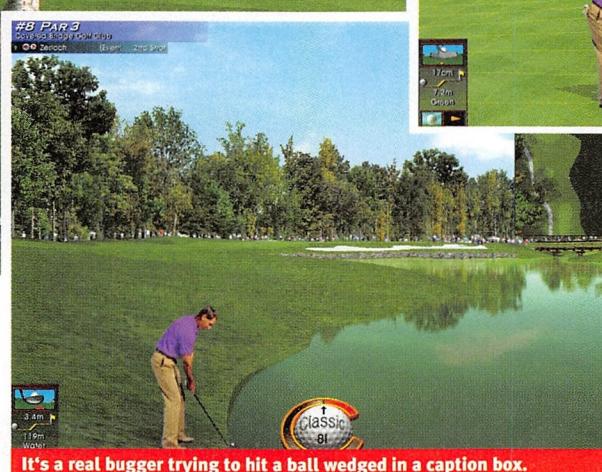
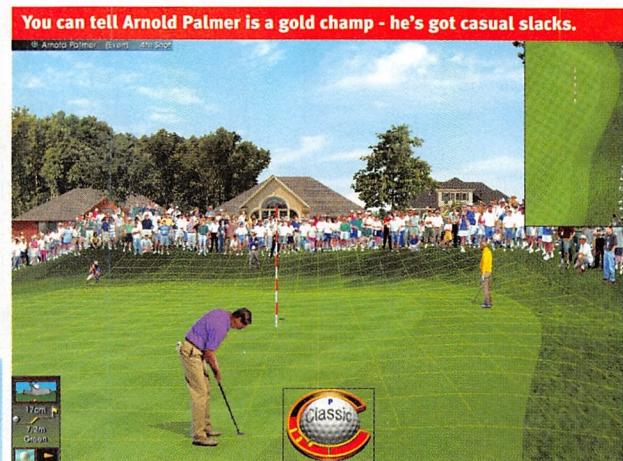
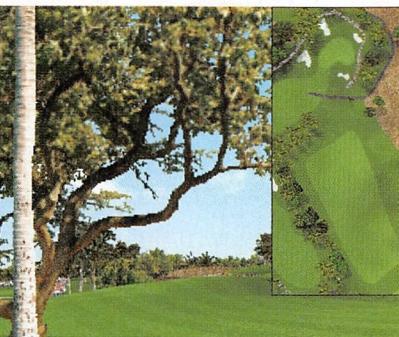
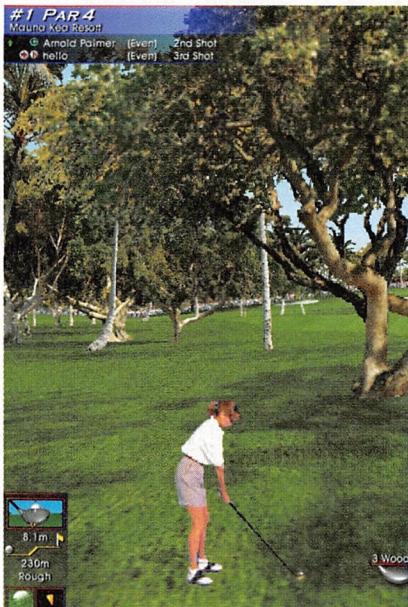


HN20643

Links 2000

● Genre: Golfing sim ● Players: 1-8 ● Developer: Access ● Publisher: Microsoft ● Distributor: Microsoft ● Price: \$TBA ● Rating: G ● Available: Now ● Need: P166 MMX, 32MB RAM, 60 MB HD
 ● Want: PII 233, 64MB RAM, 600 MB HD ● URL: www.microsoft.com/games/links2000/

The Rolls Royce of golf gaming returns with only a nominal overhaul.



While there are numerous golf titles around on the PC these days, few have earned the high reputation of the Links series. Back in the days when people were proud of their all new powerful 386 machines, Links was there showing off stunning high resolution graphics. Since then we've had numerous course updates, Links 98 and Links 99. We now stand at the cusp of a new millennium and in comes Links decked out with the magic numbers 2000. Considering the producers Access Software have been assimilated by the all powerful Borg Collective, err... "merged" with Microsoft, golf fans might be pondering how this corporate shuffling has affected this latest in the series. Well not much at all, it seems.

Highly evolved shrubs

The biggest non-difference with Links 99 is the graphics. The only officially listed change is that trees and shrubbery are now more detailed. Well that's nice, but as much as shrubbery is rightfully acknowledged for its contribution to the world of golfing, slightly nicer looking green stuff doesn't qualify as a quantum leap for gaming. On top of this, the Links graphic engine is starting to show cracks. While still looking damn spiffy, especially in 1024x768 16 million colour mode, objects such as spectators still look like cardboard cut-outs pasted on. Even hitting one of them on the head with a speeding golf ball doesn't provoke any animation or response.

PLUS

www.greenapple.com/~rsshape/caddyshack.htm
 A nice source page for the classic golfing movie Caddyshack.
 Head back to the days when Chevy Chase was still funny and Bill Murray went to war with a crazed gopher.



PCPP

FOR: New Easy Swing method makes for a comfortable start if you are new to golfing games. Links is still the Rolls Royce of PC golf.

AGAINST: Should be called Links 99 Gold Edition or Links 99 +.

"...slightly nicer looking green stuff..."

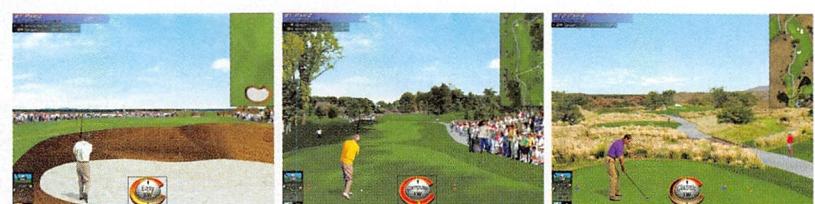
have the choice of two click, three click and the difficult Powerswing systems of Links 99.

Cautious upgrade

The only other big additions comprise of being able to play on Microsoft's Zone, which allows an easier route to finding online playing partners, and there are also five new courses. Although with at least 25 course add-ons already available for previous versions, buying Links 2000 for new courses alone is not really necessary.

Links 2000 is not a bad game. All of the Links trademarks are included, superb ball physics, exacting course detail and truly challenging tournaments. The only fault lies in the close similarity to Links 99, making it a poor value choice for present Links owners. Still though, it must be hard for developers to improve on a golf sim that is already reality on a CD. VR Helmet included with Links 2000?

Pete Sharpe



79

NASCAR® Racing 3

NASCAR Competition from the driver's seat.
This is white-knuckle racing at its best.

Games U Play

\$69.95

Nascar Racing 3 (G).
Are you ready to compete with the greatest drivers in the world? This wicked 3D racing simulation features 28 tracks and 45 drivers from the 1999 Winston Cup and Busch series.

proudly distributed by

dataflow
Setting the Standard

**SIERRA
Sports**



Harvey Norman

SYDNEY METRO • AUBURN SUPERSTORE • BALGOWLAH SUPERSTORE • BLACKTOWN • CAMPBELLTOWN • CARINDALE • EVERTON PARK OPENS DECEMBER • CARINGBAH SUPACENTA • CHATSWOOD CHASE • GORDON CENTRE • LIVERPOOL MEGACENTA • MOORE PARK SUPACENTA • PENRITH • WILEY PARK NSW COUNTRY • ARMIDALE • BATHURST • COFFS HARBOUR • DENILINU • DUBBO • ERINA • GRAFTON • INVERELL • LISMORE • MAITLAND • MOREE • MUDGEES • NEWCASTLE SUPERSTORE • NOWRA • ORANGE • PARKES • PORT MACQUARIE • TAMWORTH • TAREE • WAGGA WAGGA • WARRAWONG • YOUNG ACT • FYSHWICK • WODEN PLAZA BRISBANE METRO • ASPLEY OPEN 7 DAYS • CARINDALE • EVERTON PARK OPENS DECEMBER • MT GRAVATT • OXLEY • GOLD COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • NOOSA HEADS NOW OPEN • TWEED HEADS SOUTH OPEN 7 DAYS QUEENSLAND COUNTRY • SUNSHINE COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • BUNDABERG • CAIRNS OPEN 7 DAYS • GLADSTONE OPEN 7 DAYS • MACKAY • ROCKHAMPTON NORTH • TOOWOOMBA • TOWNSVILLE MELBOURNE SUPERSTORES • OPEN 7 DAYS • DANDENONG • GREENSBOROUGH PLAZA • MARIBYRNONG • MOORABBIN • NUNAWADING • PRESTON VICTORIA COUNTRY • OPEN 7 DAYS • ALBURY • BALLARAT • BENDIGO • GEELONG • MILDURA • SHEPPARTON • TRARALGON • WARRNAMBOOL ADELAIDE • SOUTH AUSTRALIA • MARION OPEN MON-SAT WESTERN AUSTRALIA • ALBANY • BUNBURY • BUSSLETTON • CANNINGTON • GERALDTON • JOONDALUP NOW OPEN • KALGOORLIE • KARRATHA • O'CONNOR NOW OPEN • OSBORNE PARK • PORT HEDLAND • PORT KENNEDY

The computer products in this advertisement may not be on display in Karratha franchised store.

NORTHERN TERRITORY • DARWIN OPENS NOVEMBER TASMANIA • OPEN 7 DAYS • HOBART CITY • GLENORCHY • ROSNY • LAUNCESTON • BURNIE • DEVONPORT • ULVERSTONE

Some goods may not be on show or available at each Harvey Norman Franchised store.

HN20930

Starsiege: Tribes

This pioneering “multiplayer-specific” first person shooter continues to gather momentum and online acclaim.

For players tired of multiplayer sessions comprised solely of deathmatch Quake, Team Fortress was something of a godsend. Hampering its popularity, however, was the difficulty in setting the game up, and in finding local servers with low latency levels. As games like Unreal and Half-Life came to the fore, deathmatch once again became the multiplayer standard and, to a large extent, Team Fortress style gameplay took a back seat.

Thankfully, Dynamix saw fit to turn the tables on the waning popularity of

team-based multiplayer first person shooters with Starsiege: Tribes. Built from the ground up as a multiplayer only title, Tribes is truly a programming masterpiece. Tribes’ simplistic graphics and seemingly uncomplicated game mechanics belie an underlying complexity that can only be appreciated with extensive play. It caters for purists with its inclusion of straight deathmatch, but Capture the Flag (CTF) and Defend & Destroy (D&D) tournaments are the real meat of the game.



"A knee-high wall. Whadda we do now?"

CTFDD?

Each player is outfitted with light armour and a jetpack with a constantly replenished power source. Medium and Heavy armour upgrades are available, each with several advantages and drawbacks. While heavier armour enables the player to carry a greater number of weapons (and heavy weapons like mortars), there is an appropriate mobility penalty. Remote laser turrets and various sensors can be deployed, reducing the workload of defending players significantly. Backpacks enable the player to repair themselves and other players, carry more ammo. And vehicles including fast, agile scout craft and wallowing personnel carriers bring even more variety to the action.

Graphics vs. speed

Tribes’ expansive environments are one of its greatest fortés. Undulating hills extend as far as the eye can see, and there’s a seamless transition between indoor and outdoor areas. The visuals are impressive, but not fantastic. However, this lack of visual magnitude is more than acceptable as it pays dividends in keeping the framerate high and lag to a minimum.



"NArockit [HOC] mows down his teammate, Baja joins team ORGANIC."



"Peek-a-boo!"

DIY circumcision is not recommended. Especially with swords. It's best to just shoot it off.





Snipe that flying fool.

True team-play

The tremendous variety of ways in which Tribes can be played is further evidence of the sheer genius inherent in its design. Newbies can approach the CTF and D&D sessions like they would any deathmatch game, serving solely as skirmishers. More experienced players can adopt any number of complex roles, ranging from infiltration to base defence and sniping. It's entirely possible for players to become 'jacks of all trades', or specialise in specific areas of expertise. The end result is teams mainly composed of players fulfilling multiple roles as attackers and defenders, and a few select individuals performing dedicated roles as flag capturers, turret layers, personnel carrier pilots and base repairers.

REVIEWED: Issue 35

SCORED: 88%

WHAT WE SAID THEN: "Tribes use their own master server system to auto-filter the playable servers into your window, then joining is one simple click away. It's really refreshing after the heartache of Quakeworld et al. The entire game seems to have been built around anti-lag theories. Slow projectiles, gun 'warm up' time, and the lethargically dampened actions of aircraft are all part and parcel of the experience. Small price to pay though, when the results are this good."

STARSEIGE: Tribes



More experienced players approach their adopted roles with dedication bordering on fanaticism. Such individuals often become veritable Jedi Masters of their craft and, alone, represent a disproportionately high threat to enemy team members. Expert snipers are a prime example: while their laser rifles aren't especially powerful, skilled snipers are masters of inflicting psychological as well as physical damage on their opponents. The ensuing panic and disarray amongst defensive ranks is often sufficient for infiltration of the enemy base, and subsequent victory. Ultra-elite snipers take this one step further, using their finely honed skills to achieve what borders on the impossible. Sniping an adversary from the cockpit of his fast-moving scout craft inspires team members and delivers a crushing blow to enemy morale.

Teams can employ an incredible array of strategies, with some innovative players devising their own ingenious tactics. One particularly notorious clan is credited with pioneering and perfecting the infamous 'Islamic Fundamentalist' technique. This involves loading up one player with mines and grenades, then sending them on a suicide mission into the heart of the enemy base. Once there, said player rushes to a position where they can inflict the most collateral damage, before simultaneously dropping all the mines and grenades in their possession. Needless to say, the resulting explosions often vapourise unfortunate bystanders and nearby power generators, leaving the base inadequately defended. The bomber's teammates are then free to capture the flag or level the base, remaining relatively unscathed.



"...the resulting explosions often vapourise unfortunate bystanders..."

Piracy woes

Sadly, due to its popularity and a lack of copy protection, Starsiege: Tribes has performed poorly in the retail sector. Recent Dynamix estimates place the ratio of pirated copies to legitimate copies at an astounding 8:1! Dynamix are currently working on Tribes Extreme and Tribes 2. The former is a variation on Tribes, incorporating AI controlled bots for single player matches, and numerous gameplay refinements. With countless exciting enhancements and additions, Tribes 2 promises to take the Tribes experience to a whole new level. Tribes 2 is still several months from release, so those who don't already own Starsiege: Tribes would do well to investigate. For one of the most addictive and mind blowing multiplayer games in existence, the asking price is well worth it.

Brett Robinson



Tribes has a HUGE following online.

PLUS

www.planetstarsiege.com/zear/yp/yellow.html

ZEAR'S TRIBES YELLOW PAGES

Making modifications to Tribes is a relatively simple process. As a result, there are a whole host of scripts, HUD (Heads Up Display) mods and server mods available online. Zear's site includes most of the more popular mods and scripts (my personal favourites are the 'Lonely Defender' and 'Tetris' HUD's), as well as instructions on writing your own. There are also several maps and links to other popular Tribes sites.

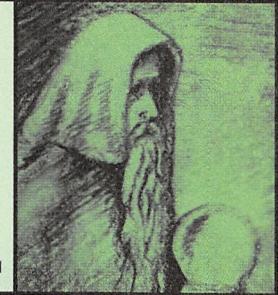
GAMEPLAY

HEADLINES: Headlines: Unravel the mystery of Homeworld • Jagged Alliance 2 tips
• Guide to GP500's Phillip Island circuit

THE ORACLE

All of the world's gamers combined can barely equal the merest fraction of the Oracle's infinite wisdom.

The Oracle is a Wisdom Dispensing Service. He cannot abide cheaters. Write to him at:
Oracle
PC PowerPlay
Level 6 418a Elizabeth St.
Surry Hills, NSW 2010
oracle@pcpowerplay.next.com.au



CODE

Age of Empires II - The Age of Kings

Type these codes in during the game:

ROCK ON - 1,000 stone

LUMBERJACK - 1,000 wood

ROBIN HOOD - 1,000 gold

CHEESE STEAK JIMMY'S -

1,000 food

MARCO - reveal map

POLO - remove shadow

AEGIS - fast build

NATURAL WONDERS -

control nature

RESIGN - instant loss

WIMPYWIMPYWIMPY -

destroy yourself

I LOVE THE MONKEY

HEAD - gives VDML

HOW DO YOU TURN

THIS ON - gives Cobra car

TORPEDO# - (substitute #

with a number) kill

opponent #

TO SMITHREENS - spawn

a Saboteur

BLACK DEATH - destroy all

enemies

I R WINNER - instant

victory

Midtown Madness

Player name cheats:

These codes are used by selecting "New" in the player selection screen then typing in these codes instead of the player name.

Showme Cops - displays all Police Units on the map

Big Bus Party - all traffic vehicles are city buses ►

The X-Files

Q I'm stuck in Smolnikoff's warehouse. There is nothing to do or look at, and I can't leave the building either. I have collected a gun as evidence. Please help me so that I can enjoy the rest of the game.

Thomas Marley, Email

A Perhaps the trauma of the recent shootings has affected your ability to communicate effectively? For once you've found the gun on the first floor, simply return to Smolnikoff and Cook and talk to them, using of course your FBI wiles and subtleties. After this, a visit to the crime lab is in order.

X-Wing Alliance

Q I know it may sound pathetic, but I just can't get past the very second level of X-Wing Alliance (the one where you are the gunner and you have to shoot the drones, etc.). When I get to the casino and kill the baddies, my pilot just flies around and around without finishing the mission! I've complete all the objectives, but I can't finish the one which says "leave the casino in one piece". Any help would be appreciated, as I am currently the laughing stock among my friends. Thanks.

Dez Wang, Email

A You are the source of boundless mirth for your friends as your seemingly insurmountable quandary is the result of gross ineptitude on your behalf. Either that, or you've had the misfortune of encountering a bug.

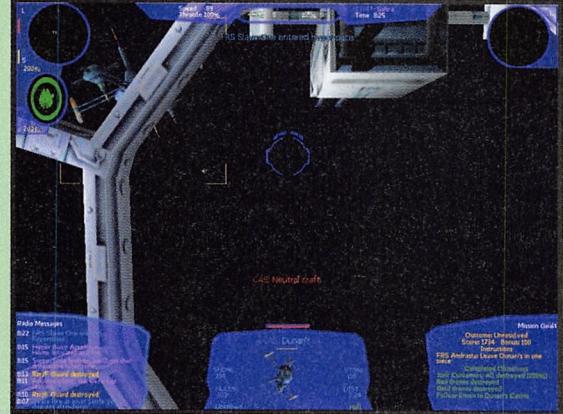
Once you've fired upon the enemies at Dunari's Casino, Emon suggests that a return to base is in order. All you have to do is sit back and let Em-Kay guide you back to base, where the mission is considered complete.

If that doesn't work, try downloading the latest patch for X-Wing Alliance from www.lucasart.com or installing the patch included on CD PowerPlay #41.

Incidentally, bonus points are awarded to those that can identify Boba Fett's infamous Slave I in the vicinity of the casino before it departs for hyperspace.

Half-Life

Q I am stuck in Half-Life. I am up to a three-headed monster that I can't get past on the way back. I have gone out the bottom door and turned on the two generator switches and I have also broken through the boarded-up door and turned on the big fan. But



X-Wing Alliance: Boba Fett lives!

when I go back up to turn on the switch to blow up the monster nothing happens. Have I forgotten something?

Please help me!

Dwayne Hurst, Email

A You deserve credit, at the very least, for discovering that you can indeed avoid the tentacled monster's attacks by carefully sneaking past it (either using the "walk" key

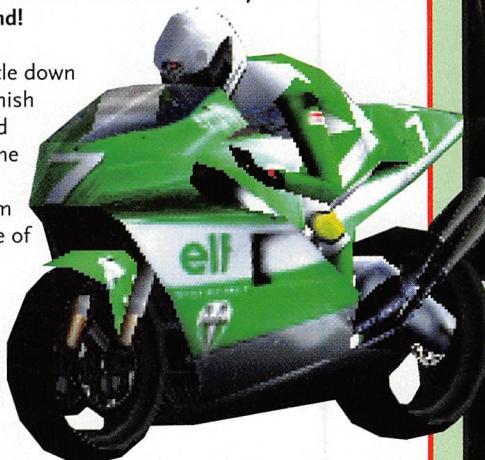
or by crawling - ducking and walking forward). No doubt you've also worked out that you can clear the boarded doorways from the safety of your perch using your powerful arsenal. This negates the need to otherwise bang clumsily on the doors with the crowbar in close proximity - an action that is sure to attract the monster's attention. There

tips & tactics

GP 500

Track guide for the Australian Motorcycle GP circuit - Phillip Island!

- Full-throttle down the start/finish straight and approach the fast right hander from the left side of the track.
- Just as you pass the 100 metre sign, shift down two gears and hold the throttle steady as you make the turn. At the apex, gently ease throttle back on again as you back out of the corner.
- As the ripple strip disappears to your left, plant the brakes hard and drop to 2nd gear - holding the bike at 100kph for the next 180 degree left hander. Out of this corner, fly down the next straight keeping the bike to the right side of the track in preparation for the fast left hander coming up.
- As the bike starts to turn in, come off the throttle slightly, then quickly bring it back on. This will drop your speed just enough to make the corner cleanly.
- As you exit the corner, immediately hit the brakes HARD. Your speed needs to drop below 70kph for the right hand hairpin.
- Accelerate to 3rd gear then bring it back down to 2nd for the sharp left hand bend and accelerate up the slight slope.
- This turn is followed by a long chicane. Take the first bend in 180kph and the second in 200kph, remembering to turn early so as to clip the apex of both bends.
- Speed up the next straight. As the bike hits 5th gear, come straight off the throttle and brake gently until the bike is in 3rd gear for the next uphill left-hander. As you reach the crest of the hill, hit the brakes hard and take the next right-hand hairpin at 60kph. Accelerate out of this holding the bike in 1st gear until you clear the next left turn.
- Accelerate down towards the last corner, and hold the bike in 4th gear for this 160kph left-hander.
- To squeeze those extra few hundredths of a second out of the lap, get on the gas just before you reach the apex, then full-throttle down the start/finish straight to cross the line.



Follow the above advice to avoid situations like this.



It's called Rain because it's always raining. Clever, huh?

is hope for you mere mortals yet.

To destroy the tentacled monster, however, you'll need to restore power to the test fire chamber, and ensure that there's a steady supply of fuel and oxygen to the chamber (of course, fire needs oxygen to burn).

To restore power, make your way from the lower level of the test fire chamber until you arrive in a large cavernous room featuring large prism-shaped object suspended from the ceiling. This is the generator. Carefully make your way up to it and turn both of the switches on.

To re-establish a fuel and oxygen connection, make your way to the room with the large fan again (accessed from the second level of the test fire chamber). You'll have to clear the boarded area with some grenades (your crowbar will also do here) at the ceiling - though it will take a leap of faith. Once through the vent, you'll eventually find yourself in the fuel room. Turn on both the fuel and the oxygen.

You'll now be ready to dispose of the monster.

Make your way back to the chamber control room, hit the switch, and stand back...

Silver

Q I can't find lower Rain, let alone the Necromancer in lower Rain. I have been searching everywhere. Please help if possible. ▶

George, Email

A If only people took greater heed of what was said to them - it would save so much confusion and time. To get to lower Rain, head south (running down from the entrance to Rain) until you come across an alley with a bell in it. Simply ring the bell as per Albert's directions, and the gate will open for you. Oh, you've forgotten his instructions already? Bah. Ring the bell three times and pause a while, then ring it twice and pause a while, then give it one last ring.

Once through, you'll soon have to contend with a frightful werewolf. Just remember which of the elements werewolves are mortally afraid of. No? Oh dear. It's silver. You'll be able to find some in the general area.

CODE

► **Tiny Car** - all traffic vehicles are compact cars
amizdA eoJ - all traffic vehicles drive around in reverse

Jet Planes - all traffic vehicles are jet planes
Warp Eleven - all AI is 10x faster

Player name easter eggs:
The following easter eggs are only available in the single-player Cruise Mode. Enter the first code as a player name, then pick the proper car to activate the corresponding new vehicle.

vasedans - Cadillac generic car

vasedanl - Bullet generic light car

vavan - Ford F350 van

vadiesels - City Bus diesel

vacompact - VW Bug VW Rabbit

vapickup - Ford F350 pickup truck

vabus - City Bus

bus with new paint job
vadelivery - Ford F350 delivery truck

valimo - Mustang GT random limo

valimoblack - Mustang GT black limo

valimoangel - Mustang GT white limo

vataxi - Cadillac yellow cab

vataxicheck - Cadillac green checkered cab

vaboeing_small - City Bus mini jet

In-game cheats:

These cheats will only work in single-player mode.

Press **Ctrl+Alt+Shift+F7**. A box should appear on the screen. Type the following codes:

/nodamage - no damage

/damage - damage on

/dizzy - spinning sky

/fuzz - toggles cop radar

/postal - horn fires

mailboxes

/ufo - replace planes with

UFOs

/swap - swap the train with

a string of 737s

/slide - ambient cars have no friction

/puck - no friction

/grav - half gravity

/talkfast - commentary plays fast

/talkslow - commentary ►

CODE

► plays slow
/big - big people
/tiny - tiny people
/nosmoke - wheel/damage
smoke off
/smoke - wheel/damage
smoke on

System Shock 2

While playing a game, hold the Shift key and press the Semicolon key (;) to display the command prompt.

Then, type one of the following codes and press Enter to activate the corresponding cheat function.

UBERMENSCH - maximum stats

PSI_FULL - psi points

ADD_POOL [number] - obtain indicated amount of cyber modules

SHOW_VERSION - display version number

FROB_TOGGLE - switch between frobs

SUMMON_OBJ [item name] - create object from item list:

20 NANITES

AP CLIP

ASSAULT RIFLE

BIG NANITE PILE

BLAST TURRET

BRAWNBOOST IMPLANT

CRYSTAL SHARD

ELECTRO SHOCK

EMP RIFLE

FUSION CANNON

GREN LAUNCHER

HEAVY ARMOR

ICE PICK

LAB ASSISTANT IMPLANT

LASER PISTOL

LASER TURRET

LIGHT ARMOR

MEDICAL KIT

MEDIUM ARMOR

MIDWIFE ORGAN

MONKEY BRAIN

NANITES

PISTOL

POWER CELL

PSI AMP

PSI BOOSTER

RECYCLER

SHOTGUN

SLUG TURRET

STANDARD CLIP

STASIS FIELD GENERATOR

SWIFTBOOST IMPLANT

TIMED GRENADE

TOXIN GRENADE

WORM LAUNCHER



SiN

Q Please help me, all knowing one. I need to know how to abort the missile's launch on the Silo level. I was given a pass code card but I don't now how to use it.

Sue Plumb, Email

A The obvious (and most noble) solution is never always the most correct one. There is no way of aborting the missile's launch, so the best you can do is to try re-directing it. You do this by using the severed arm you came across to access silo 1. Once inside, head to the control room and unlock silos 2 and 3. You must then go into silo 2 and lock down the missile. Then, re-direct it to silo 3 and you'll have averted the imminent and immediate disaster.

Dream Web

Q I have the Blues Beckett disk but can't open it. Somebody told me to just press enter for the password but that doesn't work. Please help me!

Billy Smith, Email

A Your friend was right - enter will work provided you've logged on as the correct person. Logon here as Ryan, Beckett, or Louis and hitting enter at the password screen will get you past this bothersome - however necessary - inconvenience.

Dark Forces II: Jedi Knight

Q I've had this game for about a year now and I still have not mastered the Lightsaber. Any tips, o-wise one?

John Ferngul, Email

A The lightsaber is an elegant and intuitive weapon, and absolutely deadly. You've been practicing for a year with it, and still feel uncomfortable? Perhaps you should take up gardening instead.

However, if you choose to persist - know that the lightsaber is best used only in close combat. To become a successful Jedi Knight proficient in the art of the lightsaber, timing is your greatest asset. It is all too easy for the rash initiate to enter a combat situation wildly flailing the weapon around. Doing so lessens the chance of you connecting with an enemy and doing any damage, and leaves you open to attack. Practice, then, performing the slash only when you are close enough for it to connect. You will soon master it.

For more difficult opponents, learn to use the prolonged "secondary" attack function of your lightsaber. The added flourish ensures maximum damage in the shortest possible timeframe.

The lightsaber can also deflect energy bolts fired at you. However - be warned that the odd one will get through. It is therefore better to dodge laser fire than to take it head-on with your light saber.

Combined with the Force protection power however, the lightsaber becomes the ultimate weapon. Protection absorbs most of the damage that hasn't been deflected by the lightsaber, and you're free to fell enemies at will.



Hey, he's got two lightsabers! What a gip.

Dog Day

Q I can't get out of jail. I've found what appears to be a door in the middle washing machine and colours in the 3rd cell which match the ones on the machine, but after hours of changing lights I've come up with nothing. And the online help bubble isn't much help! What do I do?

Wade Avery, Email

A You are on the right track. The lights on the machine should be in the order of - purple, green, and light blue. Press the button and before you know it, the secret passage will be made abundantly clear to you. Once through, freedom will once again be your guarded ally.

Baldur's Gate

Q Oh wise Oracle, help guide me. I've just gotten Baldur's Gate and I'm up to the part where I am in Nashkel. I have the choice to go to Nashkel Mines or the Gnoll Stronghold. Which is best to go to first? Also, where can I find Prism and the Homocidal Gaurd that have a bounty on their head?

Thanks

Gareth Hawken, Email

A Both the Gnollish Stronghold and the mines of Nashkel will require the extensive use of potions of healing and protective spells. As for difficulty, the Gnolls and Kobolds should both prove to be modest foes.

Providing you have equipped much of your party with ranged weapons, neither of the two enemies should pose any major threat. The wise adventurer will only approach both after they've reached the second level, and have a ready supply of healing measures.

Ultimately, your choice will depend on which items you'd like to receive first in your adventure. The Gnollish Stronghold garners the Gauntlets of Dexterity and the Tome of Leadership and Influence (Charisma +1), whereas the Mines of Nashkel yield the Ring of Holiness and a Short Sword (+1). The Oracle will not make up your mind for you, however!

You will find Prism working on his masterpiece to the south of the entrance to the mines of Nashkel.

THE RACES ARE ALIGNING.

THE ARMIES ARE GATHERING.

THE APOCALYPSE IS APPROACHING.

AND PEACE IS CURLED UP IN THE FETAL POSITION, WHIMPERING.



WWW.GODGAMES.COM



"IT LOOKS LIKE TURN-BASED STRATEGY GAMING IS ABOUT TO GET A SHOT IN THE ARM... IT WILL HELP SOLIDIFY AND STRENGTHEN THE GENRE." - IGNPC.COM

"INCREDIBLY DETAILED GRAPHICS"

MAKE THIS THE MOST LIKELY CONTENDER TO THE FANTASY TURN-BASED CROWN." - PC ACCELERATOR

The wise ones have seen an omen of doom in the form of a star in the night sky. The age of peace has officially been bludgeoned to death. The elfin court lies in ruin, and two factions have emerged. Battle flags have been raised, and silence has enveloped the land. This is the calm before the storm. You cannot choose to avoid the apocalyptic battle that looms on the horizon. Hatred and the need for revenge have a very long shelf life.

AGE OF
WONDERS™



www.ageofwonders.com

Age of Wonders, the Age of Wonders logo, Triumph Software, and the Triumph logo are trademarks of Triumph Software, Inc. © 1998 Triumph Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Gathering of Developers and godgames are trademarks of Gathering of Developers, Inc. © 1998 Gathering of Developers I, Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Take 2 Interactive Software and the Take 2 logo are trademarks of Take 2 Interactive Software. All other trademarks and trade names are properties of their respective owners.

Yet to be
classified



HOMeworld PLAYGUIDE

John Dewhurst is lying in the gutter looking up at the stars...

Homeworld is the new breed of real time strategy. With its impressive use of a three dimensional playing field, useable and immersive gameplay features, and the varied and balanced units, there is enough depth in the game to keep the most ardent gamer perplexed for some time. If you're finding the Homeworld experience a little daunting, you've come to the right place.

Problems you find in Homeworld don't tend to be small, easily fixed dilemmas, but rather concern broader strategies in using your entire fleet. Here you'll get the lowdown on general game issues that will make the single player missions a breeze and the multiplayer games at least bearable. You'll be well on the way to interplanetary success.

Group control of units

Most of the problems that face you in Homeworld are control issues: how to control your units in the 3D environs (deceptively tricky!) and how to use your ships most effectively in battle. Those who know the

frantic drag selection of units across the screen, know the terror of disorganisation! Generally, you should be using keyboard shortcuts as much as you can in the game. Right-click menus are very inefficient, especially in tight situations. Most

importantly, use your hotkey group presets (1-0) to take control of large numbers of units. Unless you want to control a particular ship, you shouldn't be selecting units from the screen, unless you know exactly what's going on.

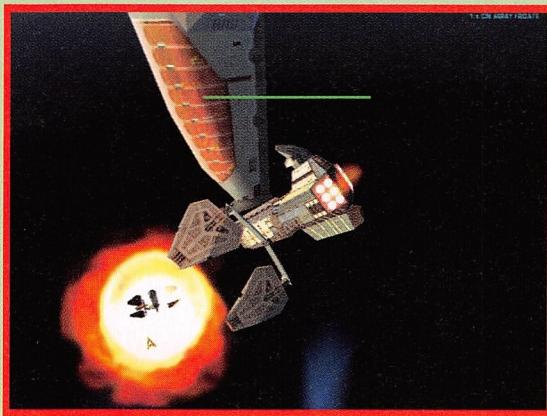
A good way to start is to

have a preset group for all the units in your fleet, that way if you need everyone you can get them. Then set a group for all of your resource collectors. Next set groups of all the different classes of craft. This way, all of your units are at your fingertips. Smaller strike craft are

CONCENTRATED FORMATIONS

Your forces work better when grouped together. The formations you should be using for your strike craft are the tight ones: X and claw. This concentration is about establishing unified fire; especially on a first run, try to aim for a single enemy target.





only effective in large numbers anyway, so it makes sense to keep them together.

In the midst of battle, it's tempting to select a whole bunch of units to attack that rogue ion cannon frigate. However, it's disastrous to have a conflict between the orders you've given to preset groups and orders you're giving to the SAME units you've just selected. You'll often end up splitting groups of units and weakening the assaults begun earlier. The bottom line is to trust your attack plan and leave the rest to your units.

3D World

Players who fail to use the extra dimension available to them are more vulnerable to attack, unable to attack effectively and thus perilously at risk! You have to remember that ships' sensors detect in a sphere around them, so that you can be directly above someone and be undetected. Every unit has

the opportunity to move in any direction and should use it.

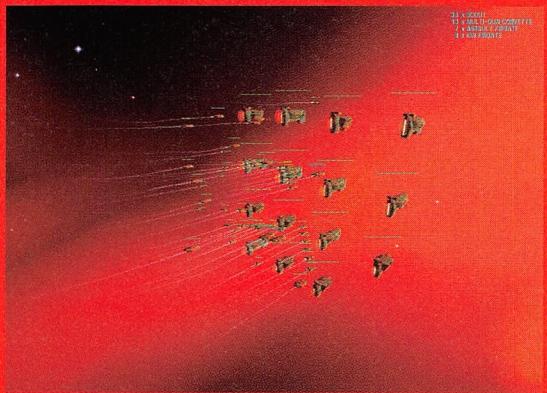
Attacking in three dimensions offers a lot more options. You can have an escorted group of frigates roll in from straight ahead, while your destroyers come up from underneath. You can have groups of Scouts and Interceptors coming in from three directions - the opportunities are endless. Similarly, you shouldn't send your forces into battle in flat lines. If you need to concentrate your forces, use particular formations. The arrangement of units should help to make a protected and powerful force.

Of course, this also affects defence. If you have forces protecting your Mothership, don't just drop them all in front and hope for the best. It's particularly critical to spread proximity sensors around areas of interest in three dimensions. A group of Scouts can move around fairly quickly if they know where to go, but if there are no sensors to tell them, then you're in trouble. It's



WALL FORMATION

This is a good way to arrange stationary craft to attack slow units. Think of a mixed group of frigates and super capital ships concentrating fire on a single Carrier. It's a quite exposed formation, especially against strike craft, so make sure the support is there.



most important that you think in a spatial way about the game, so that you're prepared for what can happen.

Resourcing

There are two parts to production: supplying Resource Units and building things with them. Resource Units are the life-blood of your fleet and harvesting them is one of the most crucial aspects of Homeworld. The Resource Collectors collect the available materials and convert them into RUs. Each time a Collector has a full load, it must dock with the Mothership or Controller to return the resources and start over.

Controllers cut down on collection times and are

essential to your supply operations. For this to work, Collectors need to be close to Controllers at all times. The best way to streamline your resource collection is to assign a Resource Controller to guard a Collector. That way, the Controller will follow the Collector wherever it goes.

In multiplayer games, you will find yourself having to battle for the available resources. This will certainly occupy much of your time and effort, since control of resources is such a big tactical advantage. In the far-less-problematic single player, the only thing you need to worry about is triggering an event in the mission that might cause an enemy

attack - or walking right into the enemy fleet.

The lesson to learn is that you need to always protect your resourcing operations with as much force as necessary. Those Collectors and Controllers aren't cheap and losing them because you couldn't be bothered to protect them is a bad mistake. They are supplying your entire fleet and they should be protected accordingly.

Guard your resource collectors with strike craft. Most likely, you won't be attacked by anything larger, but if you are, they should buy you enough time to dispatch more ships to deal with the situation. Set your Collectors to aggressive because it's of little use to

1 x SCOUT
7 x MULTI-GUN CORVETTE
6 x ASSAULT FRIGATE
7 x ION FRIGATE



have them flee to the Mothership every time they are hit by a scout!

The whole issue of resource harvesting is far more involved in multiplayer games. Apart from the constant harassment of your opponent's RU gathering, there are inventive ways to deal with those that attack your operations. Consider the use of a cloak generator to hide combat forces while the perfect bait of a Resource Collector operates (apparently) alone. It's called tactics and the more inventive the better.

An important thing to remember in the single player game is that a mission doesn't end when you are given the option of hyperspacing out. Only if you are suffering terribly in a battle should you get out quickly. Otherwise, take the time to collect all the resources available. If you don't, you are just putting yourself at a disadvantage in later missions.

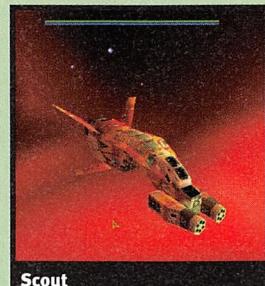
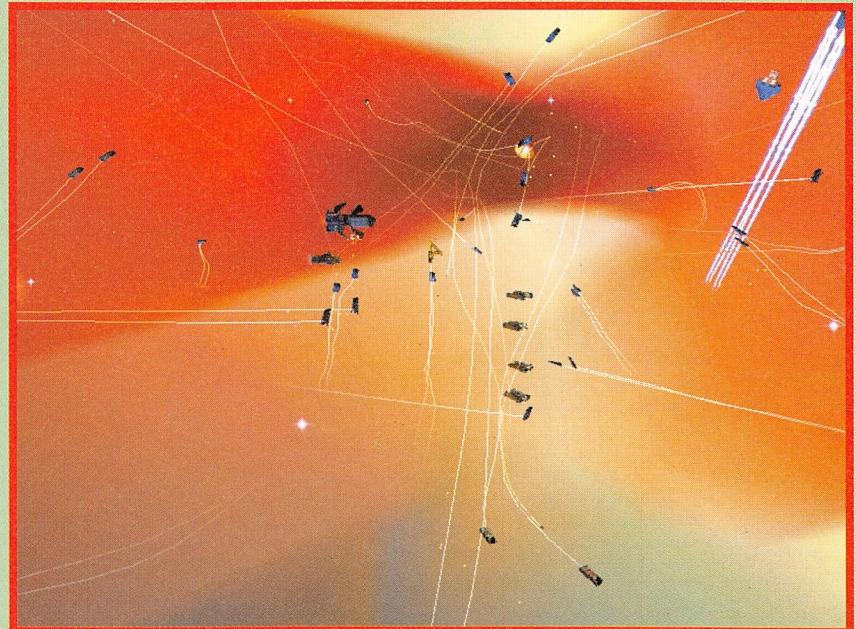
Units

Strike Craft

The strike craft include the fighter and corvette classes. The fighter class ships are the foot soldiers of your fleet. They are small, fast and cheap. For these reasons, fighter class ships are only effective in considerable numbers and their main role is in support of any of the larger ships from the Attack Bombers to the capital classes. Corvettes are quite a bit slower than their strike craft cousins, but are more heavily armoured. All strike craft can run out of fuel, so if you plan to take them far from your Mothership, supply a Support Frigate for them. Otherwise they become so slow as to be almost useless in battle.

Fighter Class

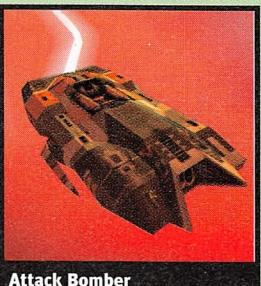
The fastest and cheapest craft available, **Scouts** form the ideal harassment force due to their high speed and evasive power. Make sure you have a decent number



Scout



Defender



Attack Bomber

of Scouts so that you can form large squadrons. As the name suggests, the Scout is a good observational craft when you need to snoop around someone else's Mothership. The speed burst means these little craft can be very useful in tight situations.

The **Interceptor** is a step up from the Scout in terms of firepower and armour, but is slower and doesn't have the speed

burst. Interceptors are a good match for slow frigates and are best used in conjunction with Scouts and capital ships. Don't replace Scouts with Interceptors!

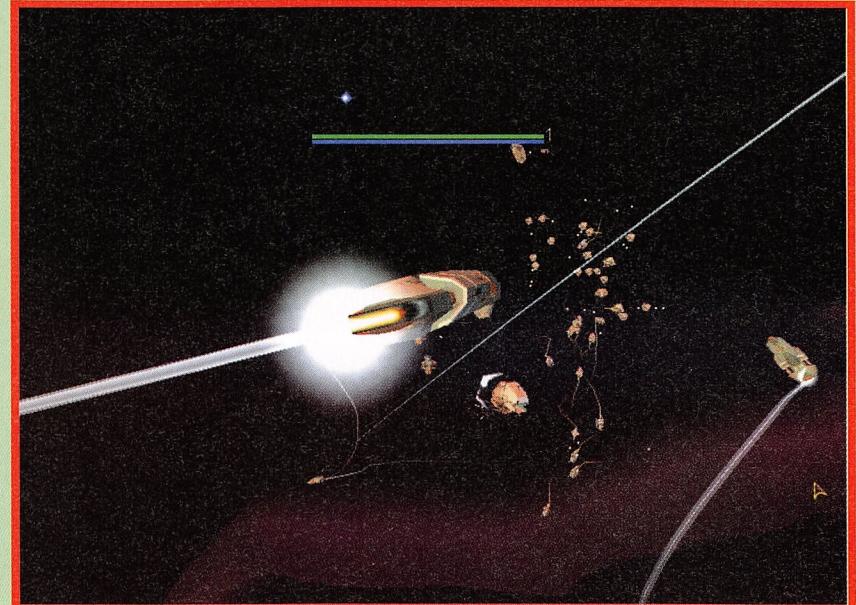
The **Defender** is a slow craft, but what it loses in speed, it gains in coverage. With a whopping 90% coverage, it is custom made for dealing with large numbers of small strike craft. Defenders don't work well alone

though, best to couple a number of them with Scouts or Interceptors.

The Kushan-only **Cloaked Fighter**'s value comes from its ability to move undetected with its cloaking device. Think of these ships as guerilla soldiers. Use them as a means to sneak up on a target unseen, then attack and flee; perfect for a craft that is only visible when it is attacking. Resource Collectors are particularly

SPHERE FORMATION

This is basically a defensive formation, a good way to surround a ship of importance and protect it from harm. The only effective use against enemy targets is really against non-combat units like resource units, because it lacks the strength in numbers of the other formations.





AGE OF EMPIRES II

THE AGE OF KINGS

You were not born noble,
but your destiny is to reign as king.

- * Command your knights in menacing formations.
- * Dominate the world's marketplaces.
- * Embody the spirits of William Wallace, Saladin, Barbarossa, Joan of Arc, and Genghis Khan.
- * Listen to monks speak of thirteen unique warriors and civilisations, all in their own dialects.
- * Achieve victory through conquest, economic stranglehold, or exploration.
- + Find more glory at www.microsoft.com/games/age2



msn Gaming
ZONE

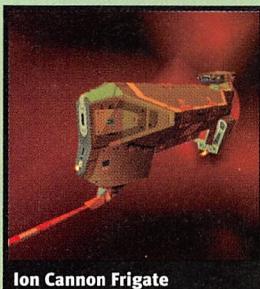
PLAY IT FREE ON ZONE.COM

PlayNow!

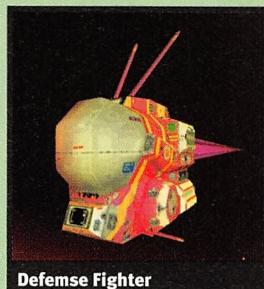
© 1999 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Age of Empires, The Age of Kings and MSN are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.

Microsoft

GAMEPLAY



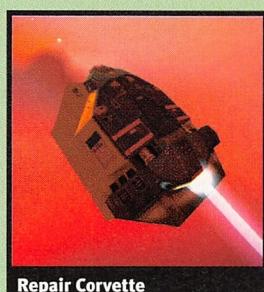
Ion Cannon Frigate



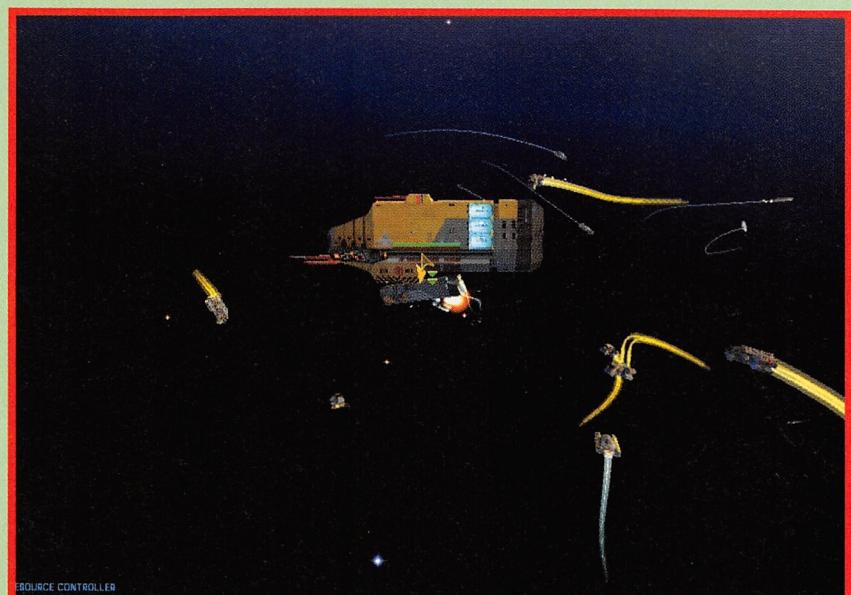
Defense Fighter



Light Corvette



Repair Corvette



SOURCE CONTROLLER

good targets. The only disadvantages come in the need to support the **Cloaked Fighter** due to its large fuel requirement and the fact that proximity sensors pick them up.

The **Attack Bomber** is a capital ship special. Use them to take down assault and **Ion Cannon Frigates**. The **Attack Bomber**'s plasma bombs are rather slow moving and they are the least manoeuvrable of all the fighter class, so are best used with **Scouts** and **Interceptors** to divert fire. They aren't particularly useful for anything bigger than medium sized frigates but are relatively cheap, and can form the backbone of a quick smaller attack.

The **Defense Fighter** is a handy addition to your Taiidan fleet as it knocks down enemy fire, although it has no effect on missiles or ion beams. It is a combat support craft that complements your offensive ships and is useful in defence against strike craft.

Corvette Class

Corvettes form the bridge between the speedy strike craft and the slower frigates. They are more heavily armed but perform badly when assigned to a smaller strike craft role. It is important to instruct their movements carefully: have them attack suitable targets. Like all other units, they need attention or they'll be ineffective.

The **Light Corvette** is a good counter-measure to Scout and Interceptor attacks, it has great armour and good firepower against these smaller vessels. The **Light Corvette** has a good amount of speed over its heavy brother. Best coupled with other strike craft in an assault on enemy fighters.

The **Heavy Corvette** is a costly vessel that is considerably slower than the **Light Corvette** but boasts a big armour and coverage advantage. Perhaps its best feature is the Charged Burst Attack that can be used against clustered fighters and frigates. Quite useful against capital ships but needs fighter support.

Repair Corvettes are absolutely essential to any fleet. Best used as an attachment to your capital and super capital ships, set them in support role and they will repair as necessary. They also have the nice ability to repair and refuel fighters where they stand. Be sure to protect them as they can become targets if left alone.

Salvage Corvettes are a great offensive

weapon when used to capture enemy craft. Since they lack any firepower themselves, they can't be left unguarded and certainly couldn't lead an attack. But the stealthy movement of **Salvage Corvettes** into a melee can be very productive indeed.

The **Multigun Corvette** is by far the most useful corvette against smaller craft. Its high speed and coverage make it particularly good against large groups of fighters. In combination with your own strike craft, it is very effective in cleaning up **Scouts** and **Interceptors**.

The **Minelayer Corvette** offers the chance to set up minefields as well as attack by releasing mines at targets. Most useful in the former role, since the mines are almost invisible until you're right in top of them. A defensive option well worth exploring.

Frigate Class

The Frigates are the mid-sized big guns; they can attack other Capital ships and serve to augment and assist the

super capital ships. All of them require support from both fighter class ships and **Repair Corvettes**.

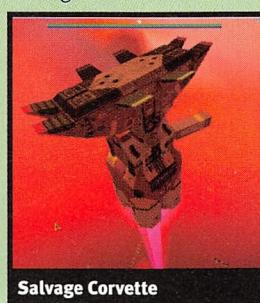
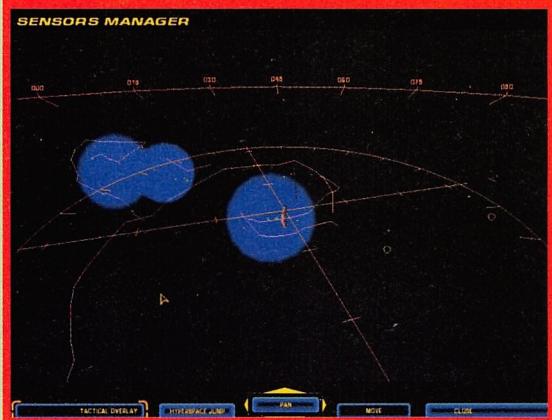
The **Assault Frigate** is a good all-rounder as far as bigger ships go. It can support **Destroyers** and **Ion Cannon Frigates** in large battles, or be the centrepiece of a smaller assault with support from fighters. It moves well for a big ship and is extremely useful with its high coverage.

Ion Cannon Frigates are great high power ships but require considerable support due to their very small coverage and atrocious manoeuvrability. When used in bands of about six, with the help of a Destroyer or two, they make quick work of bigger ships. But they'd better be protected or they'll fall to enemy fighters and corvettes.

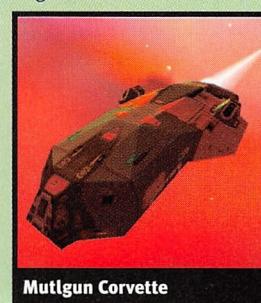
The **Support Frigate** is an extremely useful frigate that brings the **Mothership's** role of support out closer to the action. For your strike class, this support is essential in long battles. A harassment force that can't do its job and is eventually eliminated can be the

USE THE KEYBOARD

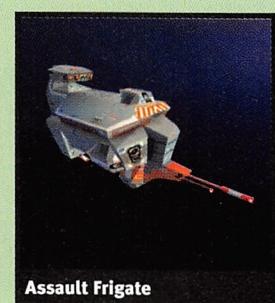
Right-click menus are cumbersome to say the least. At all times use the keyboard shortcuts. For the Build Manager press "B"; for guarding hold "G" and left click the unit to be protected; for special operations hold "Z" and left click the unit to be worked on. This goes for formations and tactics. The less time that you're stuck in a menu, the more time you have to react to the situations around you.



Salvage Corvette



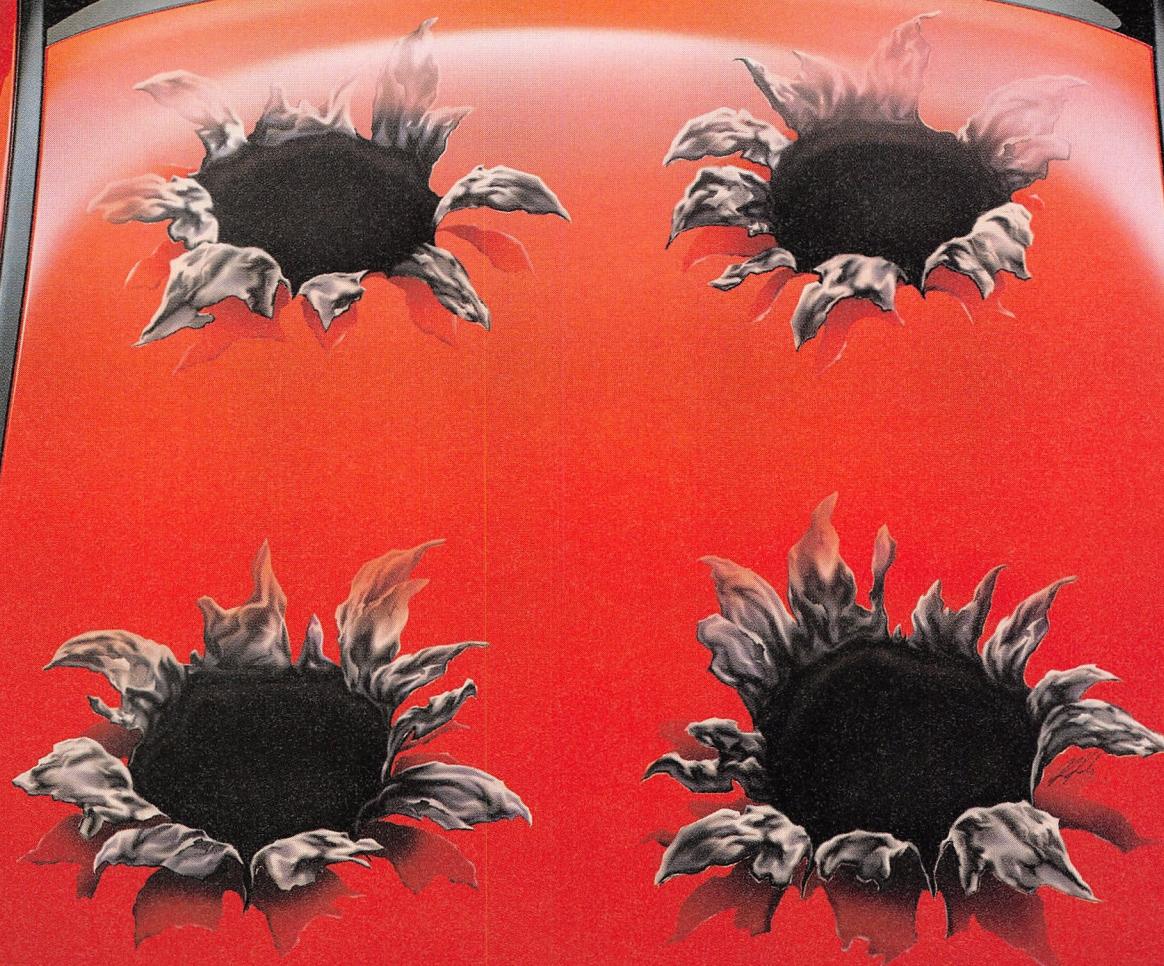
Multigun Corvette



Assault Frigate

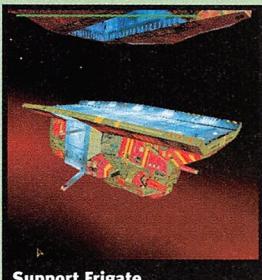
Pioneer

FX #12
Mind Blowing

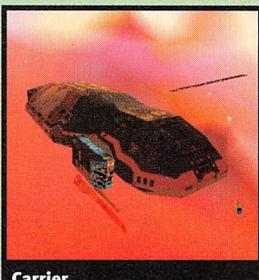


The MOSFET45 power chip, built into all new Pioneer CD Tuners.

GAMEPLAY



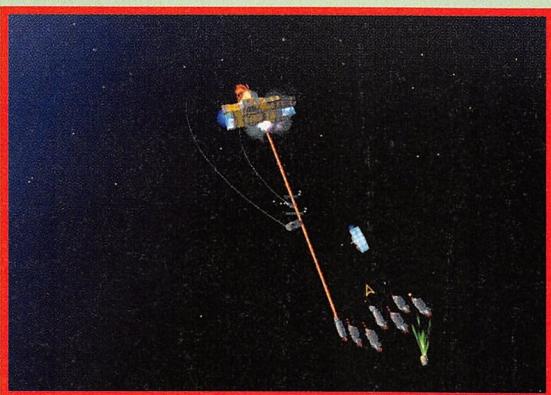
Support Frigate



Carrier



Heavy Cruiser



turning point of any battle. The **Support Frigate** will protect against such a situation.

The **Drone Frigate** is another useful unit in the Kushan defence against large numbers of strike craft. The remote drones that surround the frigate form a protective sphere. You can exploit this by moving the frigate near to a particular Capital Ship that might be suffering under the numbers of smaller craft.

Much like the **Defense Fighter**, the **Defense Field Frigate** deflects oncoming enemy fire. It does not protect against ion beams, mines and missiles though. You should produce and use this frigate accordingly: if your opponents use fighters as a large part of their offence then it will be useful. If you are faced more with Capital and larger ships, this frigate is not for you.

Super Capital Class

These ships are approaching the size of the Mothership itself. They are the main weapons and the main targets of your fleet. They are comparatively

slower than the smaller craft so you need to keep your support vessels near to them. Do this by assigning the frigates, corvettes and smaller to guard them. That way, they won't rush ahead to battle and be massacred.

The **Destroyer** is your first big gun against other capital ships. With twin ion cannons, this baby rocks! Use it in conjunction with **Ion Cannon Frigates** in taking down the large threats. Make a habit of focussing all of your group's firepower on a single target and destroy enemy ships one by one.

With its ability to fire guided missiles at targets, the **Missile Destroyer** does well across the board, from slow strike craft to capital ships. It doesn't do so well again Scouts, who are just too quick, and it needs support to stack up against the bigger capital ships.

The **Carrier** is a mobile weapons producer that supports your fleet closer to the action. Even better it allows 50 fighters and 25 corvettes to dock simultaneously. This is most effective when you

arrive at a battle and then launch them at once into the field. When used with cloak generators, **Carriers** can prove devastating.

The **Heavy Cruiser** is the biggest ship available and it has furious firepower. It does very well against all larger ships, a little worse against large groups of smaller ships. You better make sure you have the infrastructure of smaller ships to support the **Heavy Cruiser**. This one comes at such a hefty price tag, so you really have to look after it!

Non-combat class

These ships are your tactical aids in battle and shouldn't be underestimated. Practise using them and they can

make your fleet much more effective. Hard to believe but they can be more handy than an extra frigate or two.

The **Cloak Generator** is very useful in concealing ships, especially the slower, bigger ships that don't have the surprise-of-speed element normally. You might consider using these in small groups to keep them concealed. Beware the cloak generator's natural enemy: the sensor probe.

The **Gravity Well Generator** is a powerful weapon in the constant battle against strike craft. It stops these vessels in their tracks, removing their evasive advantage.

The problem is that the Generator can only be used once. You have to pick your moment!

Proximity Sensors

detect all variety of ships including cloaked vessels. You'll need them all around the important parts of your fleet. It's important to send out **Scouts** to eliminate your opponent's sensors.

A **Sensors Array** provides better information in the map screen, giving you more detailed information about the movement and number of enemy craft and resource pockets. It is pricey but if you can afford it, the extra information can be invaluable. ■

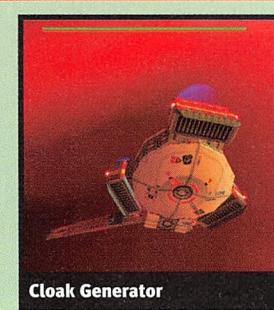


SALVAGING AND SCUTTLING

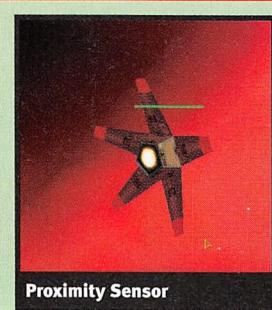
Why destroy something you can use? That's the logic behind using Salvage Corvettes to nab enemy ships. Have these corvettes trail behind the action and once a frigate or destroyer is occupied with tracking your other craft, slip them in and try to steal the craft. Beware: human players would rather destroy a craft than lose it, so as you drag one away, it may be scuttled. This is a good tactic and one you should use yourself!



Gravity Well Generator



Cloak Generator



Proximity Sensor



THE OFFICIAL

FIM ROAD RACING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
GRAND PRIX RACE SIMULATOR

500 GP

GP500



You'll need something between your ears...

...to handle what's between your legs.

Actual Screen Shots

Real Speed, Real Teams, Real Bikes... Can you handle the power of the fastest accelerating and breaking machine in the world today? GP500 lets you race the main event: the 500cc World Championship. Can you take it to the limit under pressure from the best riders in the world? It's about technique, knowing the track, knowing your opponents, understanding your 500cc powerhouse.

"This game gave me the biggest adrenaline rush I've ever had without hitting 180 mph on a real track."

Kenny Roberts Jr. Team Suzuki

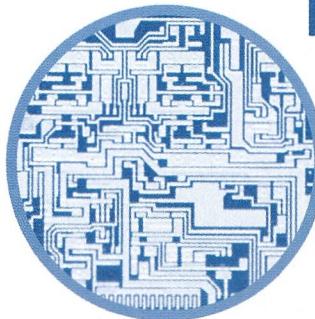


© 1999 Hasbro Interactive, Inc. All Rights Reserved

MICRO PROSE



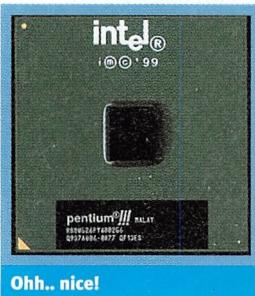
CD-ROM



TECHNEWS

Silicon State Of The Art. By Hugh Norton-Smith

Intel's Coppermine • i820 Delayed, i840 Unveiled • Monster Sound MX400 Announced • Kenwood's 72X TrueX(tm) CD-ROM Drive • Windows 2000 Update • RAM Prices Falling



Oh.. nice!



PENTIUM III PROCESSORS

Celeron A (Mendocino)

L2 Cache:

128Kb, CPU Speed

Front Side Bus:

66MHz

Pentium II (Deschutes)

L2 Cache:

512Kb, Half-CPU Speed

Front Side Bus:

100MHz

Pentium III (Katmai)

L2 Cache:

512Kb, Half-CPU Speed

Front Side Bus:

100MHz

Pentium III B (Katmai)

L2 Cache:

512Kb, Half-CPU Speed

Front Side Bus:

133MHz

Pentium III E (Coppermine)

L2 Cache:

256Kb, CPU Speed

Front Side Bus:

100MHz

Pentium III EB (Coppermine)

L2 Cache:

256Kb, CPU Speed

Front Side Bus:

133MHz

Pentium III Coppermine Unleashed

On October the 20th, Intel introduced 15 new Pentium III 'Coppermine' and Pentium III Xeon processors. PC PowerPlay were at the unveiling to report on Intel's broadest processor launch ever.

With the disappearance of Cyrix, the computer industry has been left with two main competitors, AMD and Intel. The opening volleys in this epic battle were fired by AMD with the release of the Athlon processor. Being the first truly 7th generation processor, the Athlon has gained AMD much needed credibility. Both companies have adopted different design strategies. AMD has gambled on the radical new Athlon processor, which includes a completely new core, copper interconnects and new bus technology. Athlons are currently on sale at 700MHz, with faster models expected before the year's end.

On the other hand, Intel have

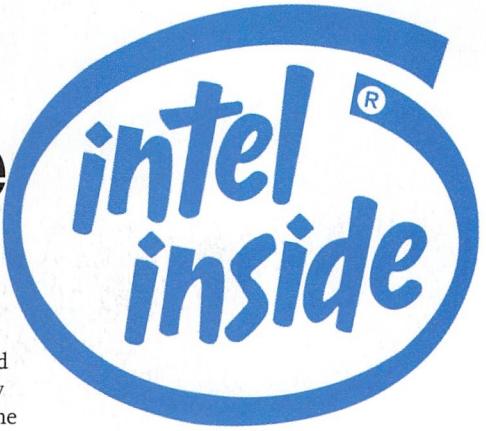
constantly recycled and revised their P6 technology (originally seen in the Pentium Pro) as the basis of their product range. With the introduction of the Coppermine, there are no less than six different types of Pentium III processors on the market. To help you navigate your way through the confusing marketing, there's a rundown on the available processors on the left.

So what makes the Coppermine (PIII E/B) stand out from its peers? Whilst the name 'Coppermine' appears indicative of copper manufacturing techniques, this isn't the case. The Coppermine uses traditional aluminium technology. Despite this, the Coppermine includes many unique features:

- .18-micron die size.
- Integrated On Chip L2 Cache, running at full CPU speed
- Advanced System Buffering
- Refined layout and registers
- Improved integer execution units

0.18-Micron Manufacturing

Up to this date, Pentium II (Deschutes) and Pentium III processors have been produced using a .25 micron technique. Even the innovative AMD Athlon is constructed on a .25-micron basis. Instead of

The Intel Inside logo consists of the word "intel" in a lowercase, italicized font inside a blue oval border, with a registered trademark symbol (R) in the top right corner.

continuing to push their older .25-micron standards up to 700MHz, which produces poorer (and less profitable) yields, all efforts are being made to ramp up Intel's new .18-micron manufacturing technique as quickly as possible. At smaller resolutions, signals travel faster and switches operate quicker, requiring a much smaller power supply. Of course, this results in much lower operating temperatures. While the .25 micron Pentium III processors had a threshold of around 600MHz, the new .18 micron Pentium III Es should be scalable beyond the sacred 1000MHz mark! As an added bonus, the die shrink allows Intel to cram far more processors onto the

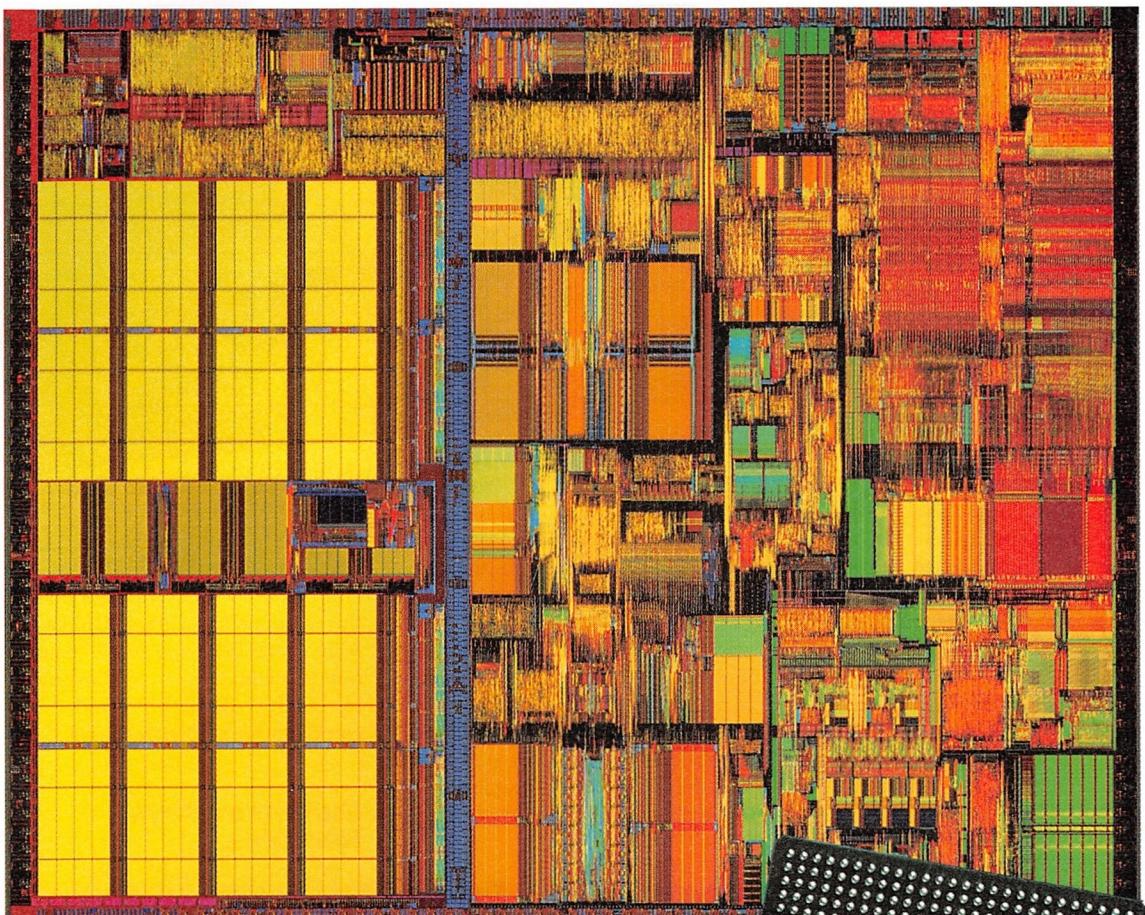
chip. The new Pentium III E consists of 28 million transistors (including cache), in

comparison to the 9.5 million transistors of the standard Pentium III.

Advanced L2 Cache

Like the Celeron, the Pentium III E includes on chip L2 cache, operating at the





The Pentium III core. Look real close and you can see the little blocks carrying electrons around.

same speed as the processor. For example, if the chip runs at 733MHz, the cache runs at 733MHz. On the other hand, a standard Pentium III 600 would have cache that runs at 300MHz. Although the PIII E only has half the amount of cache (256KB as opposed to 512KB), the added bandwidth results in huge performance gains, particularly in games.

CPU Buyer's Guide

As far as we're concerned, the AMD Athlon at 700MHz and the Pentium III E 733 perform roughly on par, although the Athlon is certainly superior during intense floating-point conditions (i.e. 3D games). So in terms of an upgrade, personal preference is really going to have to play a major role.

The types of motherboards available need to be considered when purchasing the new processor. When upgrading to a Pentium III EB, your PC must support a 133MHz front side bus and low voltages. Most BX boards, and almost all PC100 RAM, will have problems with a 133MHz FSB. Also, the voltage regulator of your slot 1 motherboard has to provide the necessary 1.6V - you may have to apply a bios update.

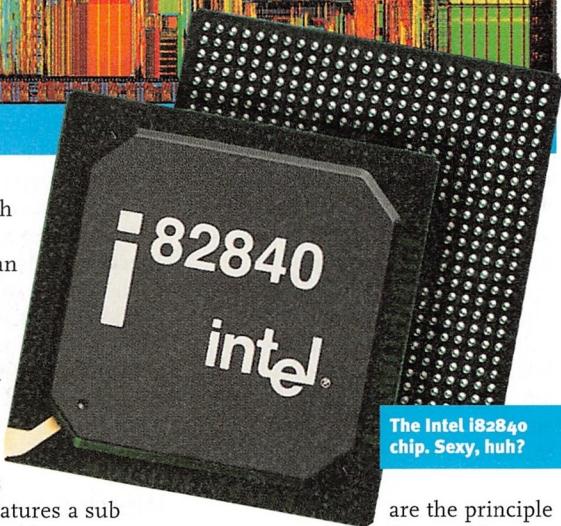
We advise Pentium III EB owners to steer clear of BX chipsets. Either invest in an Apollo

Pro based motherboard, which natively supports PC133, or wait for an Intel i820 motherboard such as the Gigabyte GA-6CX. Although the i810e supports many of the i820s features, it should be avoided. It lacks an AGP slot and features a sub standard graphics card.

Despite the general enthusiasm for both the Athlon and the Pentium III E/B, the humble Celeron remains, we believe, the best bang for the buck. With worthy performance, low price and excellent overclockability, the Celeron remains the processor for the budget-conscious.

i840 Chipset Unveiled

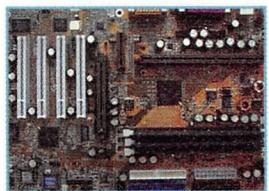
While the replacement for the venerable BX chipset, the i820, is still delayed at the moment, Intel's next generation high performance workstation core, the i840 chipset, is not. Unlike the incremental improvements featured in the i820, the i840 is a truly groundbreaking product. Indeed, the i840 is a far superior product to its predecessor, the GX chipset. Bandwidth needs



The Intel i82840 chip. Sexy, huh?

are the principle focus of the

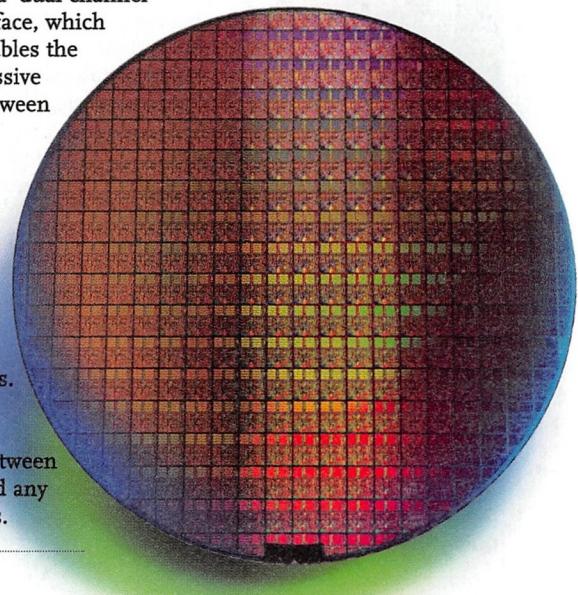
i840, as it is aimed at a workstation/server market. The i840 features a 'dual channel' memory interface, which effectively doubles the already impressive bandwidth between the RAMBUS memory and processor. 64-bit PCI slots are included allowing for an effective four-fold increase in transfer speeds. This helps minimise bottlenecks between the system and any add-on devices.



i820 DELAYED AGAIN

One of the big disappointments of the past few weeks was the further delay of the much maligned i820 core logic chipset from Intel. The i820 was originally slated for a release at the beginning of this year, but a series of well-publicised problems has held back the launch for some time. The i820 includes support for ATA/66 hard disks, AGP 4x and the 133MHz front side bus. It also incorporates an accelerated I/O architecture; RAMBUS support and built-in PCI sound. Intel has assured us that mass produced i820 boards will reach Australia before Christmas. Hopefully there will be sufficient RAMBUS stock to meet the expected demand. In a definite turn-around, Intel also demonstrated to us a prototype i820 board that used both RDRAM and SDRAM.

The Pentium chip die-cast. From this press, about 10% are scrapped by Intel's QC.



WEB

HARDWARE LINKS OF THE MONTH



www.voodooextreme.com - Honey roasted 3D gaming and hardware news.



www.tomshardware.com - The Uber Doctor. Authoritative reviews.



www.overclockers.com.au - Devoted Australian overclockers.



www.hardocp.com - Extreme overclocking



www.tweak3d.com - News, reviews and hardware tweaking guides



www.firingsquad.com Games, hardware and Quake information

Monster Sound MX400

Unlike the highly successful Monster Sound MX300, the recently announced MX400 eschews a chipset by Aureal Semiconductors. The card is based around the highly competitive Canyon 3D DSP by ESS technologies. ESS has been involved in the sound market for some time now, and the Canyon 3D is testament to their ability.



On paper the MX400 is considerably superior to its predecessor, with the ability to support 32 simultaneous sound streams. It is marketed as a total multimedia solution, rather than merely an adjunct to games. S3 hopes that the MX400 will appeal to DVD enthusiasts, musicians and gamers alike. However, the most impressive feature is the 'Rio Upgrade'. Essentially, this allows you to plug in a daughtercard, which allows for true digital encoding and playback of MP3 files, along with the addition of a stereo FM receiver within your PC. While the cost of this add-on board isn't yet known, we expect it to be below the \$100 mark. As more games move to MP3 as a sound format, and with the ever-increasing popularity of the MP3 medium, this would indeed be a very useful asset.

Like the Creative Sound Blaster Live, the MX400 will come with S/PDIF optical output for users of home theatre systems (Dolby Digital 5.1). Finally, the MX400 comes with support for every major audio API, including EAX 2.0, A3D 1.0, DirectSound 3D and 3D.

Kenwood Announce 72X CD-ROM Drive

Ever since the release of the first single speed CD-ROM drives, we've seen a steady rise in performance. Defying conformity, Kenwood have shattered the constant rise in prices and produced a drive that delivers the world's highest transfer rates to boot. The drive is based around Zen Research's



award winning TrueX technology. Like all TrueX CD-ROM drives, the 72X TrueX reads 7 tracks of data in parallel. It employs Partial Constant Angular Velocity (PCAV) for optimum performance. Unlike most 50X "Max" drives that rotate at over 11,000 RPMs and sound like F-111s, the 72X TrueX drive's design virtually eliminates vibration and noise while rotating at only 5,100 to 2,700 RPMs. It delivers a sustained transfer rate of 10.8MB/sec. across the entire disc. Outrageously fast.

robustness of NT with the multimedia features and compatibility of Windows 98. The fully 32-bit kernel and the elimination of DOS (finally!) make this a compelling choice. Unlike Windows NT, Win2000 will come bundled with DirectX 7, allowing for cutting edge graphics and compatibility across the board.

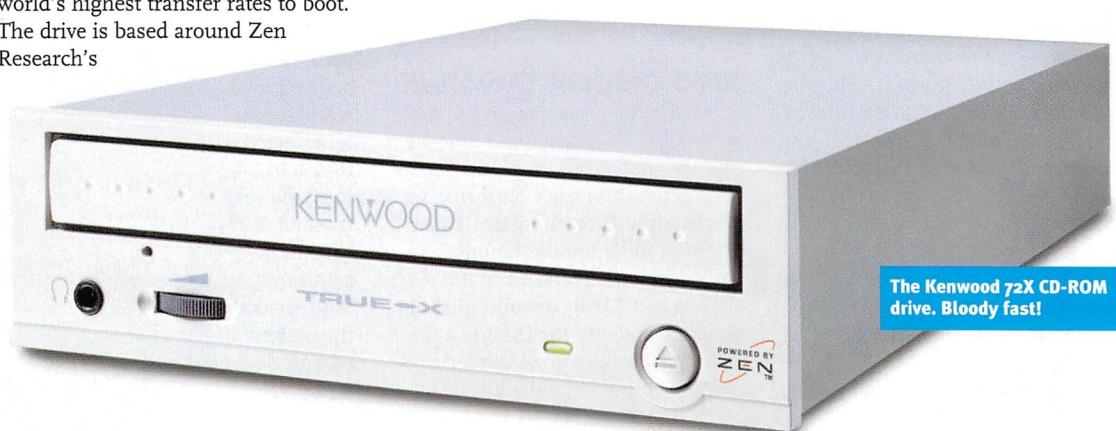
Guillemot Buys Hercules

Veteran video card maker Hercules has been bought out by the ambitious French-based hardware company Guillemot. In a deal worth an amazing US\$1.5million, Guillemot has secured the rights to the Hercules brand name, and all its assets, patents, designs and stock. We say it's an amazing amount because it's so low, but considering Hercules' recent financial troubles perhaps it isn't so surprising.

Hercules has been producing graphics cards and 3D accelerators for nearly twenty years and earned much respect, especially for their latest Dynamite TNT2 card. When asked about the purchase, Guillemot president Claude Guillemot commented: "Our objective in acquiring Hercules was to reinforce our products branding worldwide. We intend to continue to build on Hercules' name for high performance graphic products."

Windows 2000

Microsoft have confirmed that the release of Windows 2000 will be delayed until at least February 2000. Although the product will be delivered to OEMs in December, consumers won't get their hands on Microsoft's latest OS until sometime after. The new OS is supposed to mesh the stability and



The Kenwood 72X CD-ROM drive. Bloody fast!



In touch with your world...

Logitech are in touch with your gaming needs providing you with all the latest in gaming technology including 3D twist, force feedback and motion sensing. Most products featuring USB connectivity.



\$99⁹⁵



Logitech Wingman Extreme Digital 3D.

Twist handle joystick with leading edge design for enhanced performance. Provides versatile handgrip positions, seven programmable buttons, 8-way hat switch and high-precision throttle.



\$99⁹⁵



Logitech Wingman Gamepad Extreme.

Precision 8-way d-pad for fast digital movement, G-FORCE TILT™ motion sensing for proportional control, ten action buttons.



\$149⁹⁵

Logitech Soundman X1 Speakers.

Experience the full richness of CDs, MP3 and multimedia. Innovative compact design delivers realistic, high-definition sound for PCs, portable CD players and TV. **3 year warranty.**



\$199



Logitech Wingman Force Feedback Joystick.

Exclusive I-Force feedback cable-drive system for greater realism, 6-way hat switch, nine programmable buttons.



\$199⁹⁵



Logitech Wingman Formula Steering Wheel.

Lap faster and crash less. Smooth, progressive, accurate steering. Easy-to-turn wheel. Realistic gas and brake pedals. Fast gear changes with wheel-mounted paddle shifters. **1 year warranty.**



\$299



Logitech Wingman Formula Force Wheel.

Features rockin' I-FORCE force feedback technology, gas and brake pedals, programmable paddle shifters, comfortable rubberised steering wheel for realistic PC racing games.

Harvey Norman

THE COMPUTER SPECIALISTS

7 DAYS • CARINDALE • EVERTON PARK OPENS NOVEMBER • MT GRAVATT • OXLEY • GOLD COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • NOOSA HEADS OPENS NOVEMBER • TWEED HEADS SOUTH OPEN 7 DAYS • QUEENSLAND COUNTRY • SUNSHINE COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • BUNDABERG • CAIRNS OPEN 7 DAYS • GLADSTONE OPEN 7 DAYS • MACKAY • ROCKHAMPTON NORTH • TOOOWOOMBA • TOWNSVILLE MELBOURNE SUPERSTORES OPEN 7 DAYS • DANDENONG • GREENSBOROUGH PLAZA • MARIBYRNONG • MOORABBIN • NUNAWADING • PRESTON VICTORIA COUNTRY - OPEN 7 DAYS • ALCBURY • BALLARAT • BENDIGO • GEELONG • MILDURA • SHEPPARTON • TRARALGON • WARRNAMBOOL ADELAIDE - SOUTH AUSTRALIA • ENFIELD OPENS NOVEMBER • MARION OPEN MON-SAT WESTERN AUSTRALIA • ALCBURY • BUNBURY • BUSSELTON • CANNINGTON • GERALDTON • JOONDALUP NOW OPEN • KALGOORLIE • KARRATHA • O'CONNOR NOW OPEN • OSBORNE PARK • PORT HEDLAND • PORT KENNEDY The computer products in this advertisement may not be on display in Karratha franchised store. NORTHERN TERRITORY • DARWIN OPENS NOVEMBER TASMANIA - OPEN 7 DAYS • HOBART CITY • GLENORCHY • ROSNY • LAUNCESTON • BURNIE • DEVONPORT • ULVERSTONE Some goods may not be on show or available at each Harvey Norman Franchised store.

HN20603

CREATIVE LABS ANNIHILATOR GeFORCE 256

RRP: \$599

Distributor: Creative (02 9906 8887)

Back in July 1998, NVIDIA's TNT boards first came to light and became the choice of discerning gamers everywhere. Blazingly hot operating temperatures were soon forgotten, erased by the ultra-hot performance numbers provided by the TNT chipset. This was a superior card - it provided high resolution gaming with much improved image quality than what we had become accustomed to with 3dfx's offerings. Whilst the TNT2 wasn't the most innovative of designs, it maintained Nvidia's dominance in a cutthroat marketplace. We first heard rumblings of Nvidia's next generation product, the NV10, almost a year ago. In fact, it was only two months ago that Nvidia finally announced the existence of the mysterious GeForce 256 - Creative Labs have managed to get the first GeForce product to market, with their incredible 3D Blaster Annihilator.

Transformers...

The GeForce architecture is a truly revolutionary design: To give you an idea of its complexity, the GeForce contains a staggering 23 million transistors, which is three times the amount of current Intel Pentium III CPUs. The most important part in the GeForce is the inclusion of a GPU, or Graphics Processing Unit. Not only does the GeForce include a rendering engine, but it also includes an integrated 'Transform and Lighting' Engine. In order to create any 3D scene, a PC must first create a polygonal world, primarily



OpenGL

Performance and Compatibility Options

- Enable buffer region extension
- Allow the dual planes extension to use local video memory
- Use fast linear-mipmap-linear filtering
- Enable anisotropic filtering

Default color depth for textures:

Buffer flipping mode:

Vertical sync:

Use up to MB of system memory for textures in PCI mode.

Custom OpenGL settings:

Tweak for perfect Quake 3 Arena Test!

Display Adapter Information

Graphics Processor:	NVIDIA GeForce 256
Bus Type:	AGP
BIOS Version:	2.10.01.01
On-Board Memory:	32 MB
IRQ:	5

System Information

System Processor:	Intel Celeron™-A with MMX™
Total Physical Memory:	64,924 KB
Free Physical Memory:	7,092 KB

Driver Version Information

Filename	Description	Version
nvdisp.dll	Display driver	4.12.01.0353
nvdd32.dll	DirectDraw driver	4.12.01.0353
nvopengl.dll	OpenGL installable client driver	4.12.01.0353
nvcore.vxd	Resource Manager kernel	4.12.01.0353
nvarch16.dll	Resource Manager 16 bit client i...	4.12.01.0353

Additional Properties... **NVIDIA on the Internet >**

GeForce display adaptor information.

Direct3D

Texel Alignment

This allows you to position the texel origin between the upper left corner and center of the texel.

Value:

PCI Texture Memory Size

Use up to MB of system memory for textures in PCI mode.

Disable vertical sync

Render no more than frame(s) ahead.

Tweaking options to balance speed and quality.

constructed of triangles. This 3D virtual world must then be 'transformed' into a flat image so that it can be displayed. Traditionally, the CPU has carried out the laborious transformation task, passing the scene to the graphics card, so that textures can be applied to the raw wireframe models. The CPU also carries out all the lighting tasks in games. For example, in Quake when a light follows a rocket down a hallway, it is the CPU providing the necessary calculations. However, with the GeForce, the GPU takes care of these extremely floating point intensive tasks. The main benefit is that the CPU is freed up for more important duties. With a GPU present, developers can create highly detailed environments, and are able to increase the polygon count greatly. Though don't expect most developers to embrace this until GPUs become more commonplace.

Game support

In light of this, are our Pentium III or Athlon's useless now? More importantly, will the GeForce's GPU allow us to hold off that upgrade to our antiquated PII 266? Of course not. Games that include extremely complex physics engines (Falcon 4.0) or tough AI (Unreal Tournament) will still require a beefy processor for optimal play. Another restraint on GPU performance is game support. Whilst OpenGL comes with full support for hardware transform and lighting, DirectX games are still somewhat lacking. Although DirectX 7 includes native support for T&L, the current batch of games utilise their own native T&L engine. Naturally, you can expect a decent increase in performance and visual quality as games mature.

Nevertheless, for most games brute fill rate is all-important. The GeForce features a powerful rendering engine, with a fill rate of 480 m/pixels.

Whilst not a staggering figure, it remains significantly faster than the TNT2 and Voodoo3. Even in games without T&L, the GeForce will outperform all of its competitors. The GeForce also comes with support for AGP 4x, which doubles the bandwidth of AGP 2x. Essentially this allows for a much richer variety of textures in games. Whilst this won't have any immediate impact, the advent of the Intel i820 and Apollo Pro chipsets, as well as games with huge texture requirements, will make this feature useful.

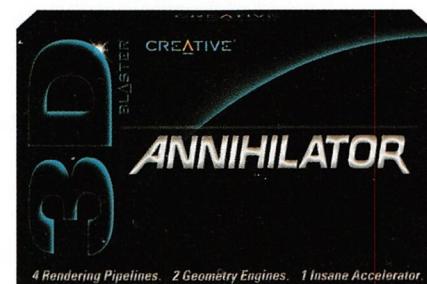
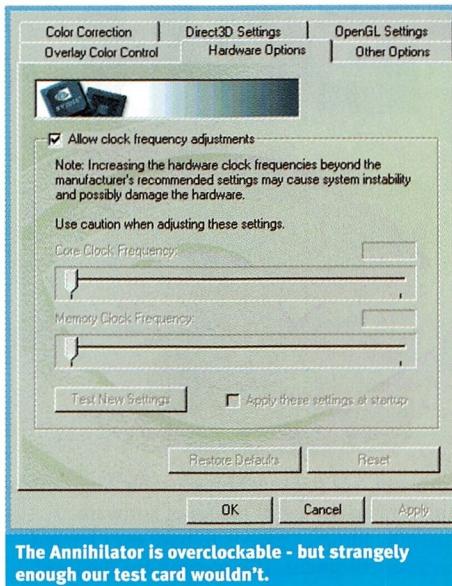
The inclusion of a 350mhz RAMDAC means top-quality 2D performance in even the most demanding Windows applications. No spreadsheet user should be without one.

The Future?

One thing to take into consideration: Creative is releasing a DDRAM version of the Annihilator in the very near future. One of the greatest bottlenecks in current video card design is the transfer speed between the video card and the onboard texture RAM. By using ultra-fast DDRAM, much higher speeds can be. Whilst the DDRAM version will be slightly faster, it will come at a significantly higher price tag. There is also expected to be a 64MB version.

The inclusion of a 256 bit Quad Pipe rendering engine, coupled with a potent Transform and Lighting engine, will do wonders to your gaming rig. Potentially, the GeForce could revolutionise gaming much like the original Voodoo Graphics. 3D gaming will never be the same.

Hugh Norton-Smith



BENCHMARKS

All benchmarks conducted on Pentium III 550, Abit BE6, SB Live! and 128MB of RAM. The reference card was an Asus V3800 TNT2 Ultra with 32MB. N.B. the Nvidia reference drivers 5.43 were used on both cards. Performance should dramatically increase with upcoming drivers.

Quake3Arena Test

High Quality

3D Annihilator: 58

Asus V3800: 40

Normal Quality

3D Annihilator: 84

Asus V3800: 68

Fast Quality

3D Annihilator: 92

Asus V3800: 76

3D Mark:

3D Annihilator: 5642

Asus V3800: 4021

VERDICT

For: The 3D Annihilator is a stable, stylish fusion of exhilarating performance and next-generation features.

Against: Rather limited support for T&L in existing games. No Linux drivers.

GUILLEMOT FORCE FEEDBACK JOYSTICK

RRP: \$249

Distributor: Ubisoft (02 9362 1414)

Stepping up to meet the challenge of offering total situational awareness in games, especially flight sims, is Guillemot with their new Force Feedback Joystick. It's a unique product: it offers you active, tactile feedback, adding another dimension to the flight-sim experience.

The Force Feedback Joystick is a behemoth, certainly bigger and sturdier than the Thrustmaster and CH offerings. The base is a heavy-duty design, with a non-slip surface. The stick itself is perfectly shaped, with 12 well placed, fully programmable buttons. Also included is an analog throttle wheel, which is quite invaluable in flight simulations. Developed as an ambidextrous product, the layout is perfectly symmetrical. Naturally, a separate power supply is required to operate the powerful force feedback mechanisms. Gamers will also notice the USB interface - USB makes installation a snap. Just plug in, select and calibrate.

The stick is clearly a second-generation force feedback product - tactile stimulus is no longer a mere gimmick, but a useful adjunct to the rest of the gameplay experience. X-Wing

Alliance sprang to life, Falcon 4.0 felt that little bit more convincing, and Descent 3 was amazing. Many joystick manufacturers make the mistake of overdoing the force feedback effects, so that they interfere with your movement. With the Guillemot stick, effects were complimentary to the game experience, rather than distracting.

With a range of games now supporting force feedback, gamers cannot afford to ignore force feedback

devices. And the Guillemot Force Feedback is the current leader of the pack.



LOGITECH GAMECAM

RRP: \$279

Distributor: Logitech Australia (02 9972 3711)

Technical Requirements: PII 300, 64MB RAM, USB Port, 125MB HD, CD-Rom, Windows 98

Recommended: 8MB SVGA card, PII 400 or above

Essentially, the GameCam is a repackaged QuickCam Home with the extra software by Reality Fusion. The QuickCam Home lacks the creepy "eyeball" styling featured in most Logitech QuickCams, its conventional camera shape making it easier to manually grip. It also comes with an integrated microphone and manual focus. The USB connectivity port makes setup and installation a breeze, with both Windows 98 and MacOS recognising the camera automatically. Similarly, the included suite of image manipulation and video tools worked flawlessly.

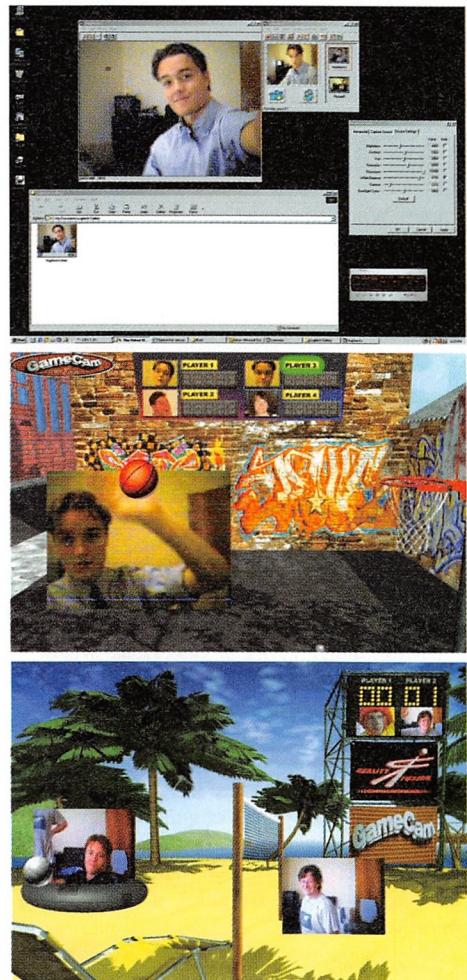
The GameCam comes with a crude assortment of games. Included is a volleyball 'simulation', a basic basketball game and a karate beat-'em-up. Do not expect Quake-style gameplay. If you manage to get past the array of counter-intuitive menus, you will be faced



with some of the most inexplicably bug-ridden and downright awful pieces of software masquerading as games to have ever landed on your computer. If it weren't for the fact that you're paying for this software, this may have been excused. After all, it's the hardware that counts.

As you can see from the screenshots, the QuickCam Home's image quality can't match that of more expensive digital cameras or video-capture cards. Nevertheless, if you need a one-stop, low-cost digital photography and video solution, it's satisfactory. For video conferencing, it performs admirably. At \$80 over the standard retail price of a QuickCam Home though, this package doesn't come recommended.

Hugh Norton-Smith



MICROSOFT SIDEWINDER PRECISION STEERING WHEEL

RRP: \$169

Distributor: Microsoft (02 9870 2368)

Not particularly renowned for their contribution to the world of simulated racing controllers, Microsoft have certainly set some pace with their latest release. Both on, and off the virtual track, the Microsoft Sidewinder Precision Racing Wheel is a winner. Sporting the traditional "Sidewinder" colour scheme, the Precision Racing Wheel presents a sleek looking machine whose performance comes close to rivalling the great Logitech stable of racing wheels.

The original clamp design is most impressive. Extending from the front base of the wheel is an adjustable bracket implement, which sits almost parallel with the underside of the base. Impaling the end of the bracket is a large screw-like bolt, which when tightened, secures the wheel tightly to any shape of desktop. Once tightened, an arm is clamped firmly over the entire bracket assembly to hold it all in place.

The face of the wheel contains six buttons, three to the left of the steering column and three on the right. All positioned well for easy mid-race thumb access. Additionally and typically expected with all modern racing controllers are the "gear" buttons located on the rear of the wheel. I question Microsoft's

decision to place these buttons on the back face of the wheel, as oppose to the traditional shaft levers, as your grip needs to extend right around the wheel to reach them. This may cause problems for people without the hand length of an NBA player.

The pedals have been designed with a cosmetic racing flavour, resembling something you would likely find at the base of a NASCAR cockpit. A forty-degree range of movement in both pedals enables precision acceleration and braking, a key factor for producing those blistering laps.

The software utility for the wheel however, is the true gem of the Sidewinder series. It is very functional and flexible allowing customisation of the wheel to suit any game on your hard drive (though racing games obviously make more sense). The software also supports pre-programmed configurations, which can be saved for future use. The versatility of the wheel is such that it can suit any racing title.

The Sidewinder Precision Racing Wheel is a winner. My vote is still secure with the Logitech Formula, but for a cheaper alternative you can't look past the Sidewinder.

Edward Fox



Welcome to Games Central

Games UPlay



\$79.95 *Gran Turismo 2 PSX (G).*

The hottest racing game is back, only bigger and better. A huge range of dream machines, 60 license tests, plus more than 24 different race tracks to choose from. Includes realistic track simulation, real car physics and the revolutionary DUAL SHOCK vibration effects.



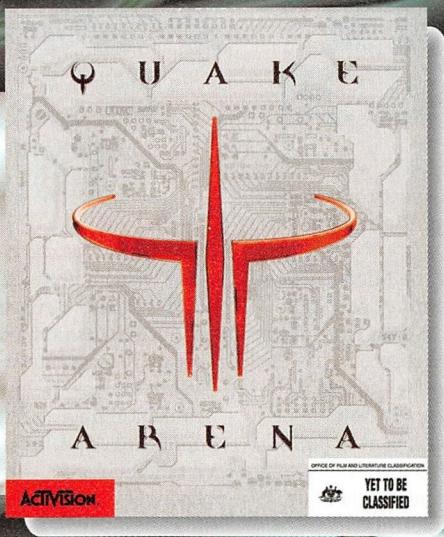
\$89.95 *Unreal Tournament (M15).*

Step into the arena, choose your weapon and stake your life in pursuit of the Unreal Grand Master title. Wield the Impact hammer and reduce your opponents to pulp, or pulverise them with the rocket-powered Redeemer.



\$89.95 *Sonic Adventures (G).*

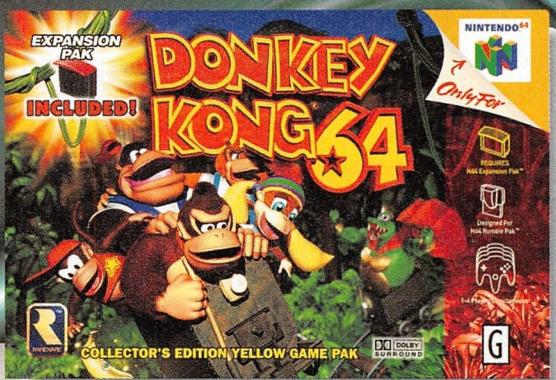
Welcome Sonic the hedgehog and his five unique friends to the mind-blowing world of 3D. Players can adopt the role of Sonic or one of his friends in an action-packed mission to prevent the diabolical Doctor Eggman and his evil henchmen from world domination.



\$89.95

Quake III Arena (M15).

Feed on the raw thrill of single or multi-player massacres. Sharpen your skills against brutal warriors and then rack up death-match kills via the internet.



\$99.95

Donkey Kong 64 N64 (G).

Join Donkey Kong, Diddy Kong and three new charismatic characters as they traverse eight mind-boggling worlds to overthrow King K.Rool and his wicked army of Kremlings.

Harvey Norman

THE COMPUTER SPECIALISTS

*CHECK OUT OUR EXCLUSIVE DEALS IN OUR DECEMBER CATALOGUE.

SYDNEY METRO • AUBURN SUPERSTORE • BALGOWLAH SUPERSTORE • BLACKTOWN • CAMPBELLTOWN • CARINGBAH SUPACENTA • CHATSWOOD CHASE • GORDON CENTRE • LIVERPOOL MEGACENTA • MOORE PARK SUPACENTA • PENRITH • WILEY PARK **NSW COUNTRY** • ARMIDALE • BATHURST • COFFS HARBOUR • DENILQUIN • MAITLAND • MOREE • MUDGEES • NEWCASTLE SUPERSTORE • NOWRA • ORANGE • PARKES • PORT MACQUARIE • TAMWORTH • TAREE • WAGGA WAGGA • WARRAWONG • YOUNG **ACT** • FYSHWICK • WODEN PLAZA **BRISBANE METRO** • ASPLEY OPEN 7 DAYS • CARINDALE • EVERTON PARK OPENS DECEMBER • MT GRAVATT • OXLEY • GOLD COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • NOOSA HEADS OPENS NOVEMBER • TWEED HEADS SOUTH OPEN 7 DAYS **QUEENSLAND COUNTRY** • SUNSHINE COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • BUNDABERG • CAIRNS OPEN 7 DAYS • GLADSTONE OPEN 7 DAYS • MACKAY • ROCKHAMPTON NORTH • TOOOWOOMBA • TOWNSVILLE **MELBOURNE SUPERSTORES** • OPEN 7 DAYS • DANDEMONG • GREENSBOROUGH PLAZA • MARIBYRNONG • MOORABBIN • NUNAWADING • PRESTON **VICTORIA COUNTRY** • OPEN 7 DAYS • ALBURY • BALLARAT • BENDIGO • GEELONG • MILDURA • SHEPPARTON • TRARALGON • WARRNAMBOOL **ADELAIDE - SOUTH AUSTRALIA** • ENFIELD OPENS DECEMBER • MARION OPEN MON-SAT **WESTERN AUSTRALIA** • ALBANY • BUNBURY • BUSSELTON • CANNINGTON • GERALDTON • JOONDALUP NOW OPEN • KALGOORLIE • KARRATHA • O'CONNOR NOW OPEN • OSBORNE PARK • PORT HEDLAND • PORT KENNEDY The computer products in this advertisement may not be on display in Karratha franchised store. **NORTHERN TERRITORY** • DARWIN OPENS NOVEMBER **TASMANIA** • OPEN 7 DAYS • HOBART CITY • GLENORCHY • ROSNY • LAUNCESTON • BURNIE • DEVONPORT • ULVERSTONE Some goods may not be on show or available at each Harvey Norman Franchised store. HN20942

GUILLEMET MAXISOUND FORTISSIMO

RRP: \$129

Distributor: Ubisoft (02 9362 1414)

Although exotic cars perpetually adorn the covers of performance car magazines, it's a statistical fact that Honda Civics, Daihatsu Charades and Holden Barina's outsell the Ferrari's 1000 to 1 every year. Similarly, high-performance PC hardware is lavished with much of the spotlight over high-selling, somewhat less glamorous products which offer good performance. At the low price of \$129 (and including a large software bundle) the MaxiSound Fortissimo is well within any gamer's economic grasp. Powered by a zippy Yamaha DSP, this really is the 'People's Car' in the sound card business.

Whilst the Fortissimo won't match the Sound Blaster Live or Monster Sound MX400 in brute strength, the Fortissimo has no lack of features. With built-in support for Direct Sound, EAX and A3D 1.0 in hardware, the Fortissimo covers all the bases. Using 4 speakers simultaneously (two independent outputs), the Fortissimo performs admirably with convincing positional sound effects. The CPU utilisation is a little higher than the rest of

the pack, but is still very acceptable. As with all modern sound cards, the Fortissimo is only sold as a PCI product. This allows for a much higher theoretical throughput and dramatically decreased sound latency.

Much like the Sound Blaster Live, the Fortissimo includes an S/PDIF digital output with an optical connector. Free from magnetic interference, the optical output makes the Fortissimo a suitable component in any home cinema system, particularly when coupled with a DVD-ROM drive that supports it. Music aficionados will be very chuffed with the included software. The Sonic Foundry Acid DJ software allows budding songwriters to create, mix and edit their own music on the fly. Acid DJ includes a library of more than 600 pre-recorded sound loops and drum samples, allowing you to create a range of music - all the



way from ska to classical!

Game developers are placing an increased emphasis on sound. With the emergence of EAX, Direct Sound and A3D technologies, no self-respecting gamer should be left behind. If you're still struggling with your antediluvian Sound Blaster Pro, the MaxiGamer Fortissimo is worth snapping up. We know you want to.

Hugh Norton-Smith

LOGITECH WINGMAN EXTREME DIGITAL 3D

RRP: \$199

Distributor: Logitech (02 9972 3711)

Gone are the days when the joystick was the icon of gaming. Now, the arrival of a new joystick is a largely routine affair. Here's another



routine joystick. It's a Logitech, which means it deserves more respect than we're currently dishing out. Slap. Right, let's get serious.

Finally Logitech discover the Microsoft-style handle twist, for rudder control. A very nice feature indeed, and Logi have even taken it one step further (behold the mad rush of technology) by providing a switch that locks the twist function. This way you won't inadvertently twist when you meant to pull.

The buttonage is typical Logitech; it's funky looking, ergonomic and just slightly unconventional. Instead of boring old buttons, the Extreme Digital 3D has small rocker switches, which function identically to buttons, but look cooler. Priorities! The throttle and trigger have a neat drilled aluminium look, while the 8-way hat switch is translucent blue. Lush. A joypot to USB adaptor comes in the box, that pleased us.

Movement is nice and fluid, with no notchiness across the center of the axis. The stick feels very solid, normally we try and break things during the testing process, but this stick was so sweet we decided to tell Logitech that we'd lost it, and kept it for ourselves.

Ben Mansill

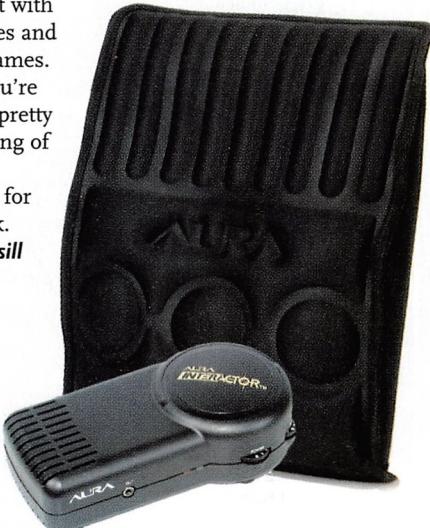
AURA INTERACTOR CUSHION

RRP: \$59.95

Distributor: Jatcar (1800 022 888)

What a product! It's black. It's soft. It vibrates. Sensational! The Aura Interactor Cushion works much like the Aura vest we're sure you've seen around the place. An internal low frequency speaker is sealed against a fibreglass sheet, when fed by your soundcard's speaker-out line it produces vibrations in sync with whatever game you're playing, but wonderfully silently. We liked the effect best with FPS games and driving games. At \$59 you're getting a pretty decent bang of gaming goodness for your buck.

Ben Mansill





Ultimate Gaming BEAST

You want the best? You want the meanest, fastest, most gibhungry gaming PC going? You want The Beast.

Each month we'll tell you about the best gaming gear going. Some of this stuff might only be affordable if you're some kind of lucky oil baron type, but for the most part Beast components are within reach of most gamers. We update this list each and every month so you know what's always the hottest. Hot, eh?

CPU: AMD Athlon 700MHz
RRP: \$1500

The Athlon has proved itself, passing the gamer's test for floating point performance (equals fast Quake) and so far there's no sign

THE BEAST

of any AMD weirdness typical in their previous CPUs, like rapid overheating and a patch for every game. Just plain fast.

Graphics card: Creative Labs Annihilator
RRP: \$599

The first of the GeForce 256 cards, and currently, the king of cards. Read the review in this very issue. You will understand, you will want.

Sound card: SB Live! Platinum
RRP: \$599

Equal best 3D support (with A3D 2.0), with clarity that will blow you away. Audio CDs come alive.

Motherboard: ASUS K7M
RRP: \$329

The best Athlon board around. Uses the hot VIA Southbridge controller chipset. Overclockable within BIOS, and is generally the best quality Athlon board going.

Hard drive: Quantum Fireball KA 18.2Gb
RRP: \$445

With a huge 512Mb buffer and 7200 rpm speed, this is storage city for months to come.

Monitor: Sony 500PS (21")
RRP: \$3899

Big, flat and big. It's a Sony, it's the best.

Mouse: Microsoft Intellimouse Explorer
RRP: \$99.95

Truly the most exciting mouse ever, this bit of gear makes all the difference to your gaming. It uses a wee laser doobie instead of a ball, which means smooth performance forever with no more cleaning. Plus it looks sexy, hard to say that about other macee...

Network adaptor: 3Com
RRP: \$140

100Mbps of gaming goodness. Reliable and compatible.

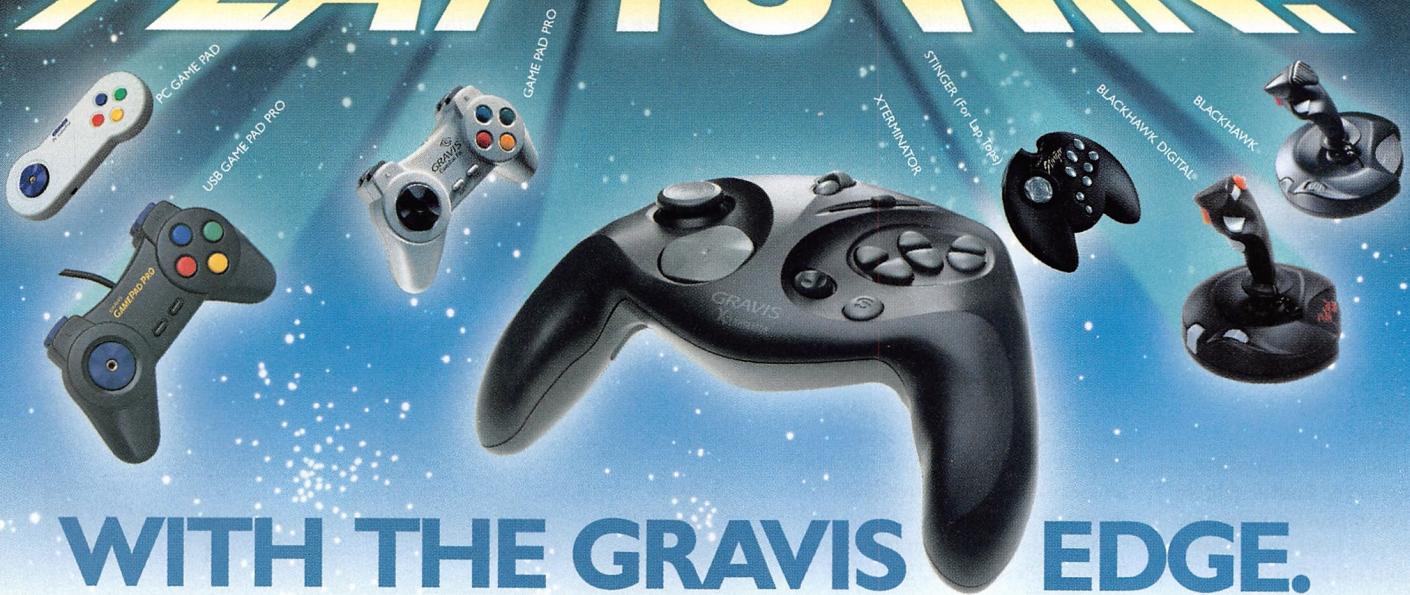
Speakers: Imagination Technologies Sirocco
RRP: \$1195

True audiophile equipment for gamers.

Case: Supermicro SC750A
RRP: \$300

Plenty of room for advanced cooling, looks the business and has slide away side panels.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO PLAY,
PLAY TO WIN.



Gravis makes game pads and joysticks for gameplayers who don't play around. We are dedicated to giving you an extra edge. With precision control. Instantaneous response. And easy programmability that puts your favourite moves right at hand.

Get the Gravis Edge. And play it for all it's worth!

AVAILABLE FROM
HARVEY NORMAN
GAMES WIZARD
ELECTRONICS BOUTIQUE
DICK SMITH POWER HOUSE

GRAVIS

TRADE ENQUIRIES
ACCO AUSTRALIA 02 9700 0180

www.gravis.com



SETUP

WRITE TO:

Setup
PC PowerPlay
PO BOX 634
Strawberry Hills
NSW 2016
setup@pcpowerplay.next.com.au

When you write remember to include as much pertinent information as possible. Send your CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT and any associated *.INI files for Windows that might tell me more about your problem. Give me as detailed an explanation as you can and be sure to include as much detail as possible about your PC. Feel free to email your questions on, if you want to snail mail, please remember to write clearly or better still print your letters. Please note that due to the volume of messages we receive, we cannot guarantee a response to your queries.

READER'S TECH TIPS

DESKBAR OPTIONS

Hello!
I have found another error (or Easter Egg, if you'd prefer) in Win9x. If you hold down Ctrl and click Start > Settings > Taskbar & Start Menu, the 3rd tab on the top right will say DeskBar Options. Look at all those options! Well done Microsoft - keep it up!

Cameron Wilmot, Email

How to push all the right buttons so there's more time to spend with your loved ones. With Ashton Mills

BURNING CDS

Q I'm a subscriber and I really enjoy reading your mag.

Since Christmas is coming up, I've been saving my cash (trying to anyway) for a MUCH needed CD Writer. I was wondering if you could help me in the selection process.

What's the difference between IDE & SCSI drives, and which is better? How much should I pay for a good CD-R? Are they easy to install?

I have a PII 350, 64MB RAM, 2 spare PCI ports, and a midi tower.

Lee Tanner, Email

A The difference between an IDE and SCSI drive is the interface, and this makes all the difference. SCSI is very good at moving information around efficiently without slowing down your CPU or other peripherals. While IDE CD burners are available, you'll find SCSI is the standard when it comes to CD burning. If you look carefully at ads you'll find that IDE burners come with a much larger internal buffer, sometimes as large as 2M - this is because IDE is susceptible to interrupts and slow downs. You want to avoid this happening when you're burning, or you'll be burning coasters instead. To compensate, the large buffers are used to store information to write whilst the drive is waiting for more information to arrive, not unlike the anti-skip buffers in portable CD players. Even so, I'd recommend burning with a SCSI drive. But if you don't have any SCSI devices, and thus a SCSI controller, it may not be worth the cost investing in a new controller and drive (SCSI is expensive).

Good brands to aim for are Toshiba, Plextor, Teac, Sony and Yamaha. Cost can vary greatly, so shop around. As for installing a CD-R - just whip off your case, screw it into a spare bay, hook up the cables and you're away.

Oh, and if you're burning under Windows 98, make sure that you're not doing anything intensive (like using your computer) or the process

might get interrupted. You won't have this problem if you're burning under Linux or NT.

THE LAST WORD ON VM

Q I have a simple (or not so simple) question to ask about virtual memory, as I cannot seem to get a consistent answer. Basically what is the optimum setting to set the virtual memory to? I have had answers varying from 200MB to 800MB! I just want to know what is the best setting for playing games. I have a PII 450 MHz, 256 MB of SDRAM, 13 GB hard drive, RIVA TNT card, 4ox CD-ROM.

George, Email

A This is one of those mystical computer questions that travels around the world every six months and raises its head over and over again.

I am about to impart to you, dear readers, the answer to one of the most common computer questions ever asked (yes, even more common than 'What's PING?'). Take note of this wisdom. Memorise it. Pass it on to your friends, family and pets.

Never forget it. And if anyone ever asks about it, ridicule them publicly.

The answer is 128MB.

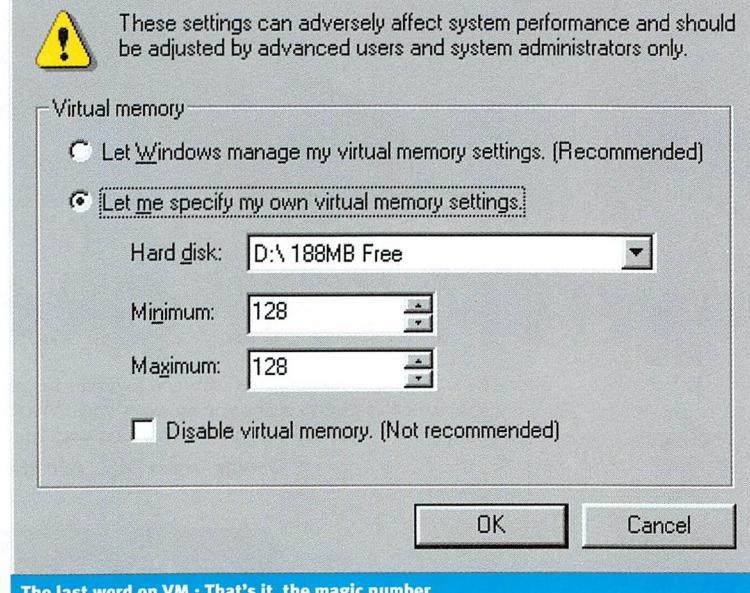
Whether you've got 64MB or 9GB of RAM, just set it to 128MB. It's clean, simple, and effective. These days virtual memory is rarely used - it was invented to circumvent low memory problems (we're talking about machines where 4MB was considered absolutely huge). With 256MB, you could zero your swapfile and you'd be fine. Of course, with Windows bloating with every release and games demanding more, the swapfile may be used - even on 128MB machines. Thankfully, this is not common.

Remember, virtual memory is slow. If your machine is wanting to use 128MB of virtual memory or more, then you shouldn't be running whatever it is you're running, because your machine is simply too underpowered to handle it.

TALE OF TWO JOYSTICKS

Q I recently purchased a Logitech Wingman Force (very nice!)

Virtual Memory



The last word on VM : That's it, the magic number

LETTER OF THE MONTH

COMPLIANT GAMING

Q I'm currently the Systems Administrator for a training company, and have spent the last several months combating the Millennium Bug. During this time, I have stumbled onto a question, that could rip out every gamers heart. It is more important than the success or failure of any company. Will PC Games be Y2K

Compliant? Please, say they will be!

James Rodriguez
Email

A Well, I don't think that's such an important question. It's a bit like asking if feeding your cat dog food instead of cat food will be a problem. The only software that can be affected by the Y2K bug is anything that uses dates. The OS most

certainly does, so it has to be compliant, but games? Sure, there may be some that might like to play around with time/dates from your PC, but if the OS is compliant this won't be a problem. Whether your games are Y2K compliant or not is even more of a non-issue as the Y2K bug itself. Worry not - by their very nature, games will be unaffected.



LETTER OF THE MONTH WINS THE MOST EXCELLENT SIDEWINDER AND DUAL STRIKE CONTROL PADS FROM MICROSOFT'S PREMIERE RANGE OF GAME CONTROLLERS.

CHEERS MICROSOFT!

which is currently plugged into my USB port. My old joystick, an MS Sidewinder 3D Pro, is still plugged into my sound card. The Game Controllers icon in the Control Panel seems to only accept one at a time. Is there any way for 2 player games to use the 2 joysticks together with the USB and Game ports?

Also, I have a Logitech serial mouse. If I buy a PS2 adapter for it can I use the PS Rate program you had on your cover CD a few months ago to up the refresh rates?

Miguel, Email

A On the old sound card joystick controllers you could only have one joystick connected unless you had a special card that supported more than one joystick, due to the fact that each game port has its own memory address. So, theoretically, with one joystick in the game port and one in the USB port it should be fine. If you go to the Game Controllers applet in Control Panel you'll notice an Advanced tab that lets you assign IDs and port drivers to game controllers. Make sure you've got multiple IDs and the correct driver associated with each joystick.

As for the mouse, yes you will be able to use the serial mouse in your PS/2 port using a PS/2 adaptor, and PS2RATE will work fine. PS2RATE simply sets the sampling rate of the PS/2 port.

UNINSTALLING MANUALLY

Q I have several siblings that have an annoying habit of just deleting the relevant file when they are finished with a game, rather than properly uninstalling it (they are in an intensive education program at the moment). As a result, the Add/Remove file in the Control

panel is chockablock with games and demos that are no longer on the system, and as a result, whenever I try to un-install them, I get errors because of the missing files.

Is there anything I can do to clean out the file?

Coopa, Email

A Yes indeed, and with that rather trendy Microsoft tool - TweakUI. You'll find TweakUI on your Windows 98 CD in the TOOLS\RESKIT directory. For some reason this is no longer present on the Windows 98 SE CDs, so remember to keep your Windows 98 CD around.

Once you've installed TweakUI, just click on the Add/Remove tab and remove any entries that no longer pertain to installed software.

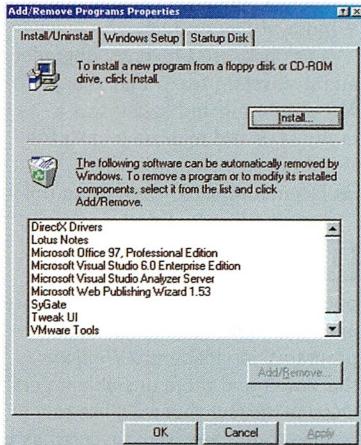
LAN STATS

Q I'm sure I'm not the only one around who gains satisfaction as my very own game of Quake pops up in the server list while playing on a network. Whether it's the half a second it takes to refresh and come up, or the fact that you brought that little game that popped up into the world for everyone on the LAN to see, I'm not sure. What I also gain lots of satisfaction from (maybe equaling nailing someone in the head with a railgun) is stats. We all know when we finish a good 3 hours online gaming, and then disconnect we see we have downloaded about 20MB or so.

What I would like is to be able to finish a game of Quake on a LAN, and be able to see how many MBs passed through in that game. Is there a way of doing this? This would be cool for big LANs over a couple of nights to see how much data has been passed around.

Stewart Gray, Email

A And I thought I was the only one to get excitement from stats! Well,



Uninstalling manually: TweakUI, as handy as a McDonalds at 4am after social drinking

I'm not sure about any Windows apps that monitor network bandwidth (though NetMedic comes to mind - there may be shareware ones also) but Linux most certainly can. Linux comes with all sorts of geeky tools that let you measure everything from total send/receive bandwidth over multiple interfaces (PPP, Ethernet (LAN)) to how many interrupts your keyboard and mouse has received. So, if you want to measure gameplay bandwidth, try running Linux as a game server - there are Linux servers for many games these days. If you go with Linux, you'll be able to have throughput graphed real-time on screen, not to mention logged to a file if you so desire!

FAT LIMITS

Q I have just formatted my 8.4GB Maxtor hard drive. When I reinstalled DOS, it also reformatted the drive but only as a 2GB one. I don't know how to get it back to 8.4 without re-installing DOS - which would make it 2GB again. Please help!

Col, Email

TECH TIPS

ONE-CLICK INTERFACE

One of Windows 98's more interesting features is the one-click interface. Thing is, using it looks downright silly when every clickable icon is underlined. However you can keep the one-click interface and the old style no-underlines by doing the following:

- Click on down to Control Panel
- > Internet Options
- > Advanced
- > Underline links
- Set it to 'Never'.
- Next, click My Computer
- > View
- > Folder Options
- > Custom
- > Settings
- > 'Click item as follows'
- > Single click
- > 'Underline icon titles consistent with my browser settings'

Now your desktop and folders look a lot nicer, but you can still use the one-click feature.

READER'S TECH TIPS

CPL WOES

I've actually found an alternative way to delete Control Panel items, which is useful for anyone (like me) who purchased a packaged brand name system (I'm actually very happy with mine) and did not receive the Win 98 CD. All you have to do is find the correct *.cpl file in Windows/System and delete it. Simple!

Michael Kalen, Email

A DOS uses FAT16 for its filesystem, which can only handle partitions up to 2G in size. If you want to format a single partition to be more than this, use FAT32. You can do this easily by just creating a Wing8 boot disk from a Wing8 machine, booting it, and running FDISK. The FDISK that comes with Wing8 allows you to create FAT32 partitions you can then format as per usual with the FORMAT command.

REINSTALL TIME

Q Please tell me something. When you buy a new motherboard/CPU combo, do you just let Windows load all the new components it finds for your new M/B and then delete the old ones (in my case VIA board to ABit BX) or should you do a full re-install of Windows? Does it matter?

I ask because I recently upgraded and my system froze after 6 days. The store rang and said it was a faulty M/B and told me to do a full Windows re-install with the replacement board - then hung up!

Dominic O'Grady, Email

A Whether we like it or not, Windows is an imperfect operating system and one of its more annoying faults is that the more programs you load onto Windows, the slower and more unstable it gets. Despite the fact that we'd like to believe computers were invented as a reliable tool to make our lives better, history has shown that for Windows (at least) a good 'tune-up' is needed every six months or so, and by 'tune-up' I mean a complete re-install.

Getting new hardware is a great excuse to do a full Windows reinstall. Yes, it's a hassle, but I can guarantee you'll find your clean Windows install much faster and smoother than the bloated install you currently have. Even if you don't

get new hardware, you should do a full clean install every six months or so. It's just a fact of use for Windows - a clean install will perform admirably until such a time that so much software has come and gone that the OS just becomes unstable, whereby you perform another clean install. And yes, we pay for this privilege from Microsoft.

HEALTH MONITORING

Q I recently purchased my PIII 450 with 128 MB of RAM. With this came a Gigabyte Intel 440BX/ZX AGPset motherboard. I was wondering if my motherboard had a system health monitor gadget. On the box it says that it has an "Automatic CPU Overheat Prevention System" but I have no idea where that confounded Health Monitor is (if it is there at all).

Yao, Email

A Given you've got a recent BX motherboard I'd say that it's likely to have monitoring features built-in. To access these you can either take a look around the BIOS (some motherboards report the values there) or install software that reads the monitoring circuits to report the status of your machine. If your motherboard supports this you will most certainly have received a disk with the motherboard that has the monitoring software on it.

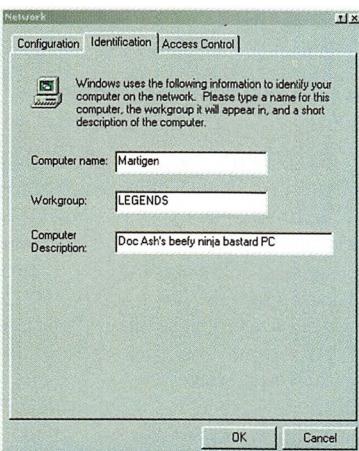
NEIGHBOURLY NETWORKING

Q I have 2 computers on a LAN and they can't seem find each other in Network Neighborhood. I've checked that I have the 'File and Printer Sharing for Microsoft Networks' protocol installed and have turned on sharing on both computers. When I use 'Find Computer' they can find each other. So why doesn't it show the other computer on the Network Neighborhood when I can still play multiplayer games fine though.

I have the following protocols installed on both machines: IPX/SPX and TCP/IP. Please help me with this problem!

Tim, Email

A This problem often occurs if the two machines are on different workgroups. Go to Control Panel —> Networking —> Identification and make sure you've got the same Workgroup set. Take note you don't need IPX to play games or copy files over your network, so you can safely remove that protocol. Also, Windows is a little slow at recognising machines on a network soon after it boots up. Give it a few minutes before checking Network Neighborhood.



Neighbourly networking : When forming a LAN, ensure everyone uses the same Workgroup

TRUE CD-ROM SPEED

Q I've heard from a computer freak (not too dissimilar from yourself) that there is no point having a CD or DVD drive at a speed faster than 24x. The reason for this being, that past 24x the disc begins to wobble and it doesn't read as well. So the faster it spins the more wobble there is, and 24x is the balanced peak of quality.

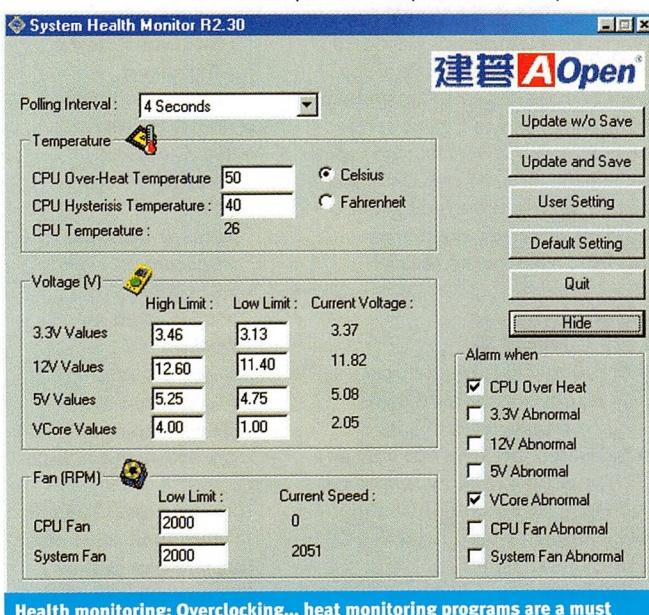
Can you please clear this up for me? I am purchasing a new computer soon and don't would rather go for quality than sheer speed.

Teddy.S, Email

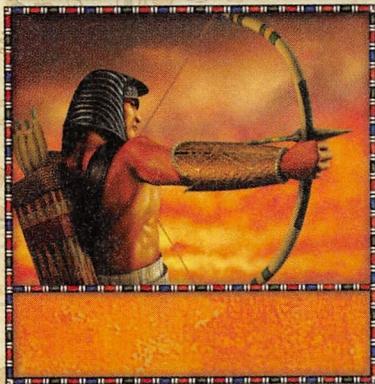
A There is indeed a limit to effective CD-ROM speeds, but this is in relation to the physics of the device - it takes time to spin a disc up to high speed, so sometimes it's more efficient to start accessing the disc sooner at a slower speed. As for wobbling, I don't think it's a common problem - fast drives are designed to operate at high speeds, which includes keeping the disc stable.

The other issue to consider is that disc speed differs from the innermost track to the outermost track (we can go a lot deeper into the physics here, but I won't, 'cause I'm not a physicist). Suffice to say, the outer track can transfer faster than the inner track, and so a drive's rating is often (and misleadingly) listed as its maximum transfer rating from the outermost track - a speed you will rarely see.

Unless you intend to transfer large amounts of data sequentially, you'll barely notice a difference in speed between a 24X and 40X drive. What's more important is access time, as games that use CDs while playing may need to read files from the CD, and slower access times can cause games to pause.



Health monitoring: Overclocking... heat monitoring programs are a must



\$89.95

PHARAOH (G).

Return to ancient Egypt and experience the thrills of building massive monuments, ruling majestic Egyptian cities, farming along the Nile and defending your city against a new crop of invaders.

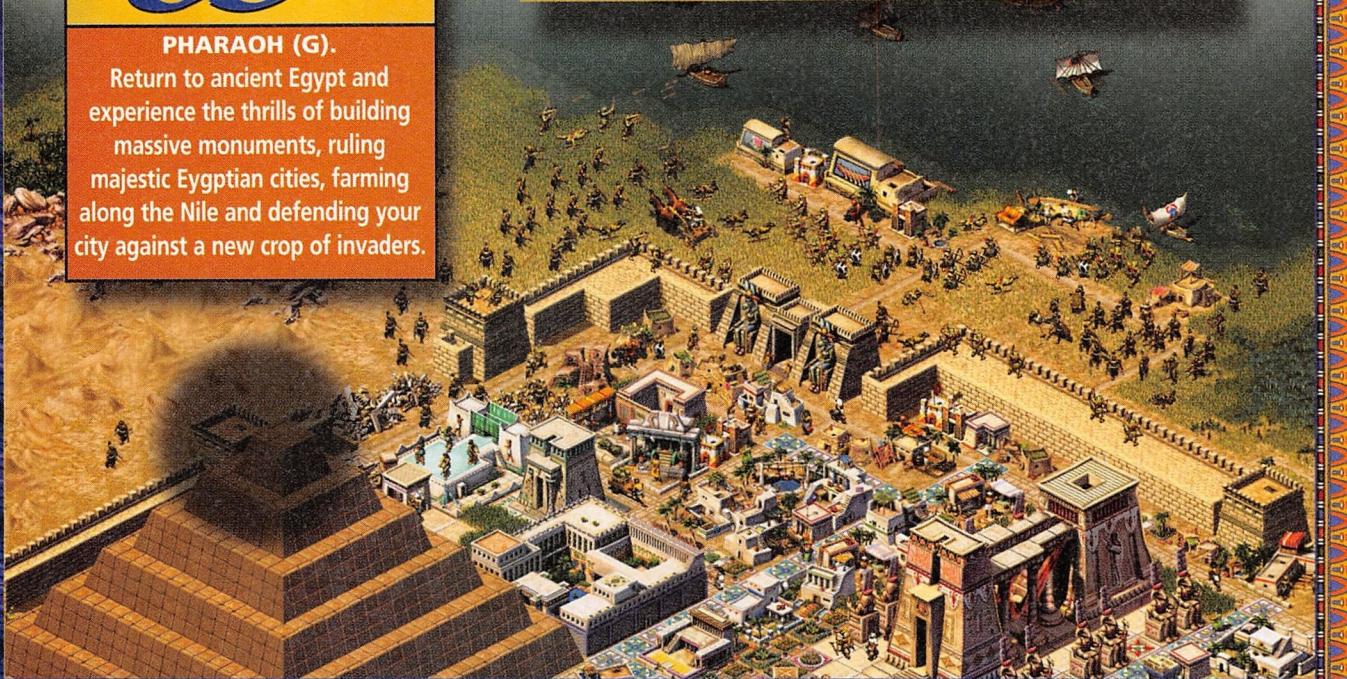
Your Rule Will Span Generations.

PHARAOH

Build A Kingdom. Rule The Nile.
Live Forever.



Impressions
Games



Harvey Norman

GameS U Play

SYDNEY METRO • AUBURN SUPERSTORE • BALGOWLAH SUPERSTORE • BLACKTOWN • CAMPBELLTOWN • CARINGBAH SUPACENTA • CHATSWOOD CHASE • GORDON CENTRE • LIVERPOOL MEGACENTA • MOORE PARK SUPACENTA • PENRITH • WILEY PARK **NSW COUNTRY** • ARMIDALE • BATHURST • COFFS HARBOUR • DENILQUIN • DUBBO • ERINA • GRAFTON • INVERELL • LISMORE • MAITLAND • MOREE • MUDGEET • NEWCASTLE SUPERSTORE • NOWRA • ORANGE • PARKES • PORT MACQUARIE • TAMWORTH • TAREE • WAGGA WAGGA • WARRAWONG • YOUNG **ACT** • FYSHWICK • WODEN PLAZA **BRISBANE METRO** • ASPLEY OPEN 7 DAYS • CARINDALE • EVERTON PARK OPENS DECEMBER • MT GRAVATT • OXELEY • GOLD COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • NOOSA HEADS NOW OPEN • TWEED HEADS SOUTH OPEN 7 DAYS **QUEENSLAND COUNTRY** • SUNSHINE COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • BUNDABERG • CAIRNS OPEN 7 DAYS • GLADSTONE OPEN 7 DAYS • MACKAY • ROCKHAMPTON NORTH • TOOWOOMBA • TOWNSVILLE MELBOURNE SUPERSTORES • OPEN 7 DAYS • DANDENONG • GREENSBOROUGH PLAZA • MARIBYRNONG • MOORABBIN • NUNAWADING • PRESTON **VICTORIA COUNTRY** • OPEN 7 DAYS • ALBURY • BALLARAT • BENDIGO • GEELONG • MILFORD • SHEPPARTON • TRARALGON • WARRAMABOOL **ADELAIDE - SOUTH AUSTRALIA** • MARION OPEN MON-SAT **WESTERN AUSTRALIA** • ALBANY • BUNBURY • BUSSELTON • CANNINGTON • GERALDTON • JOONDALUP NOW OPEN • KALGOORLIE • KARRATHA • O'CONNOR NOW OPEN • OSBORNE PARK • PORT HEDLAND • PORT KENNEDY The computer products in this advertisement may not be on display in Karratha franchised store. **NORTHERN TERRITORY** • DARWIN OPENS NOVEMBER **TASMANIA** • OPEN 7 DAYS • HOBART CITY • GLENORCHY • ROSNY • LAUNCESTON • BURNIE • DEVONPORT • ULVERSTONE **NEW ZEALAND** • CHRISTCHURCH • MANUKAU CITY, AUCKLAND • MT WELLINGTON, AUCKLAND NOW OPEN • PORIRUA, WELLINGTON NOW OPEN • WAIRAU PARK, AUCKLAND Some goods may not be on show or available at each Harvey Norman Franchised store.

HN20929

ONLINE

NGN

net game news

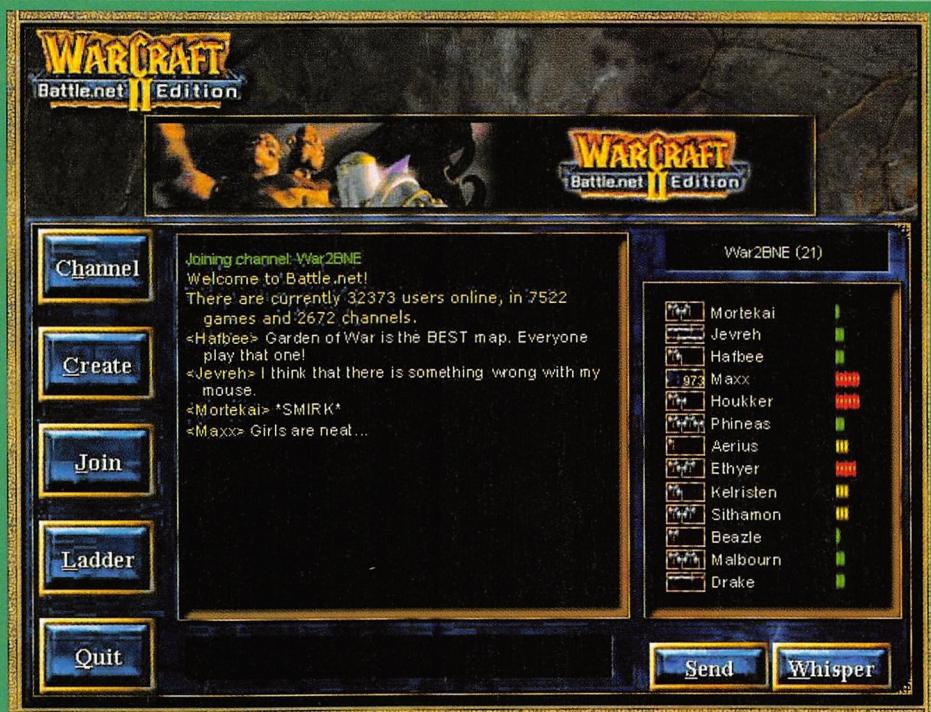
Keep face in Cyberspace

Warcraft II Battle.net Edition!

www.blizzard.com
www.battle.net

In the area of free multiplayer gaming, Blizzard have come up trumps with their Battle.net service. It's cheap (well - it's free?), damn easy to use, and features a tournament ladder to give some standing to all those hours you've invested in their multiplayer games. However, Bnet was launched well after their most popular RTS title - Warcraft II - had entranced gamers worldwide. Lacking Battle.net support, players had to turn to other "unofficial" multiplayer services to get their War II kicks.

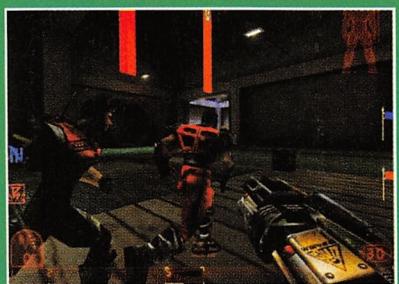
Blizzard have never been unkind to their fans. So four years since its original release, Warcraft

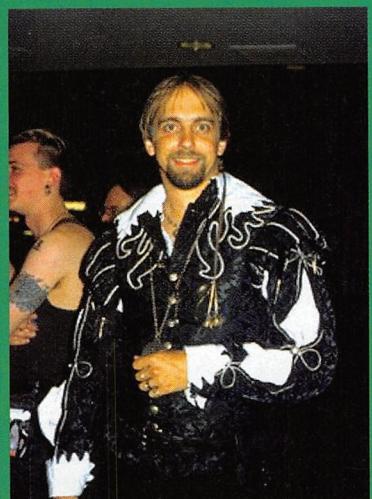


NGN Top 5 Online Games

1. Unreal Tournament Demo
2. Quake 3 Arena Test
3. Age of Empires 2
4. Half-Life
5. EverQuest

To cast your vote for the Top 5 Multiplayer Games every month, email ngn@pcpowerplay.next.com.au with your favourite online game.





Richard Garriott and "friend".

II is now available again - re-touched to support the Battle.net service. As can be expected, Blizzard have also tinkered with the core game itself - however don't expect any revolutionary changes.

Some of these changes include:

- Hot-key unit groupings
- Improved auto-commands
- Instant event-alert centering
- Shared vision (in multiplayer games)
- Two new game speeds
- Up to eight players from the same CD (from spawning)

Warcraft II Bret edition is worth it alone for the sneak preview of Warcraft III - which is looking hot indeed!

The Mystical Australian UO Server - the wait is over!

To mark the release of Ultima Online - The Discovery Edition (a budget edition

of UO, including the Second Age and the latest UO patches), EA have got some fantastic news for long-suffering Australian UO players. An Ultima Online server is finally making it to our shores. Scheduled for a late '99 opening, the real clincher is that Lord British himself (the man formerly known as Richard Garriott) will be out here to personally oversee the launch. It gets better though. The launch will be open to current Ultima Online subscribers and the star attraction will be Dick's reading of Hubert the Lion! Hurrah!

The event is planned for the first or second week of December. For more information regarding this long-overdue celebration, contact EA on (02) 9955 7744. And - we'll see you there!

Fantasy Football - UEFA Champions League

<http://www.uefagames.com/>

For the football fanatics out there, Silicon Dreams have recently started up their own version of fantasy football.

Player	Team	E	W	T
C Mark BOSNICH	Manchester United FC	3.9	0	0

This list reflects team choices as of the last Matchday. Please refer to Selection for your current team.

This spread-sheet style game allows you manage your own team of footballers from any of the EUFA teams (provided of course, you can make them fit the budget) with points awarded for each individual player according to how they've performed in the real life Championship.

While it's a satisfying endeavour in its own right, the UEFA Champions League Fantasy Football is also a competition with some fantastic prizes. Cop this - first prize is 2 tickets to the UEFA Champions League final this year, as well as all accommodation and airfare costs. How's that for cool? Further runners-up receive console systems and copies of the game.

Visit the website for more details.

PATCH NEWS

FreeSpace 2 v1.01

Unfortunately we have encountered a problem with the original shipment of Freespace 2 on some Windows95 or Windows95OSR2 systems. The problem causes the title to repeatedly ask for CD#2, even with the correct CD in the drive. This does not mean that your CD is damaged or needs replacement. We regret that the problem was discovered after the product had been shipped, but we were able to pinpoint and correct this problem immediately, and have already made an update available for the title, which can be installed by simply clicking the 'update' button, located on the Freespace launcher. If the title did not originally install, click on your 'Start' button, then on 'Run', and type D:\SETUP, with 'D' representing your CD-ROM drive letter.

After installation, you will then be prompted with the option to update your title via the games launcher. The launcher can also be accessed (after the title has been successfully installed) by:

(Start/Programs/Games/Freespace2/Freespace2).

The new version will be automatically downloaded to your system. Any future updates for the title will also be available via the update button, and we recommend that you check it periodically to assure that you are running the newest version of Freespace 2.

Note for Windows98 Users: Although we have not encountered the problem in

NGN Poll

Email your responses to ngr@pcpowerplay.next.com.au, with "NGN Poll" in the subject line.
Results to be published in #46.

In issue #42 we asked "Tiberian Sun multiplayer - do you love it or loathe it?"

Although Westwood chose not to make a paradigm shift with the much anticipated Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun, they didn't waste those many years it took to finally get it on the shelves doing nothing. No, they spent this time lovingly crafting a fine example of an RTS game, ensuring that it was as beautifully balanced in multiplayer as it was in single player. It's evident with the number of Tib Sun fans playing the game online that Westwood have succeeded in pleasing the masses.

However, the PowerPlay readership has spoken and the results are surprising to say the least. While there is no doubt a large contingency of Tiberian Sun fans out there, a significant portion of responses displayed a surprising lack of enthusiasm.

With an abundance of RTS games out there, it's not surprising that a title with a strong pedigree can be seemingly overlooked. Perhaps gamers are looking for a new twist in the aging RTS genre?

Essential

I think multiplayer is an essential part of C & C Tiberian Sun and any other game. Multiplayer lets gamers a like test their skill and their wallets (internet play can be expensive) in tournaments, challenges, one on ones and basic play like TCP/IP, modem or programs like Kali, Game Spy, etc.

Justin Peters, Email

Long live C&C

I love it! I've thrashed StarCraft and Total Annihilation to death. I can't be bothered playing TA: Kingdoms, so what other RTS games are there to multiplay? It's Tiberian Sun all the way then. The Tiberian Sun online community are a fantastic bunch and there's nothing like a nice epic battle between mates. I love the units and the landscapes and the graphics! Long live Command & Conquer!

Annihilator, Email

Not enamoured

As much as I was enamoured with the Command & Conquer series (I even played Red Alert incessantly until the tank rush tactic

became commonplace), Tiberian Sun has been a major source of disappointment for me. After having played all the major RTS titles over the last few years - both in single player and multiplayer modes - I can't shake the nagging feeling that I'm feeling terribly bored with Tib Sun. I feel like I've done it all before, and I need something new. That's not to say that Tiberian Sun isn't a fantastic game - far from it. It's a great RTS - but for me, it's a few years too late. Instead, I wait patiently for Sovereign.

Ben Carter, Email

Thief 3

The third in this ground-breaking series is billed as a multiplayer only experience. Given Thief's unusual take on the first person genre, it'll be interesting to see whether or not Looking Glass turn this into a successful multiplayer experience.

So this month we ask "Given your experience with Thief, would you be interested in a multiplayer Thief game. And if so, what would make you purchase the title?"

PATCH NEWS

► tests with Windows 98 systems, installation of the patch will in no way be detrimental to your operation of the title, and is recommended.

Again, we do apologize for any inconvenience that this may cause. We do our best to verify that our products go out as clean as possible, and hope that you understand that we are working to resolve this situation immediately. We hope that you enjoy playing Freespace 2 as much as we enjoyed creating it for you. If you need additional assistance, please feel free to contact our support department at support@interplay.com.

Driver

Below are issues which have been FIXED with Patch_Driver(USA).exe:

- FMV playing twice, third part of the Grand Central Station mission.
- LA - Police car lights do not flash during final part of "Beverly Hills Getaway"
- Credits, photos corrupted on D3D for some types of video cards.
- Interview training selecting view again causes player to appear in garage.
- Music Tracks do not loop.
- Tire tracks on D3D for some types of video cards causing crash.
- LA: texture issue on the side of a building.
- Take a Ride with Car selection cheat breaks replays.
- Pursuits - lose the lead car in a pursuit and the AI cars will behave erratically just before game pauses.
- ESC should be able to be used to pause when fast forwarding in Film Director.
- Film Director, selecting Tripod after in car view causes camera to be positioned in the car.
- "Play Chase" demo broken if first save a replay from Survival.

- Mirror if activated, switches on in pause mode on interview/training demonstrations.
- Newcastle level Pedestrians have corrupted textures under D3D for some types of video cards.
- D3D for some types of video cards - fixes to Frisco.
- Film Director, Camera can readily be moved through buildings (This has been improved)
- Jean-Paul second half replay is erroneous.

- In survival mode, chase camera choices can be made on a police vehicle, which has pinged in. On rewinding that car is removed from the scene and the camera does erroneous things.
- Auto Director sometimes positions camera under the road surfaces.
- Camera locks to the particular camera type being used when PAUSED during Desert Training

NGN TUTORIAL - Gamespy

Gamespy basically acts as an interface between you and other game servers around the world running multiplayer games. It's a painstaking program which allows you to find, sort and join games over the internet.

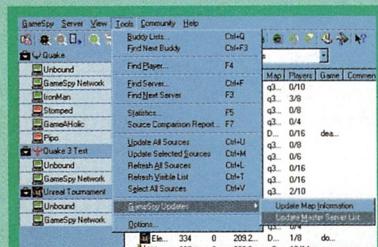
The latest release from Gamespy (available from <http://www.gamespy3d.com> and the CD PowerPlay) now supports Unreal Tournament, which is a good reason for existing users of this free online gaming service to upgrade. Here's a run through of how Gamespy 3D (shareware version) works.



Profile Settings

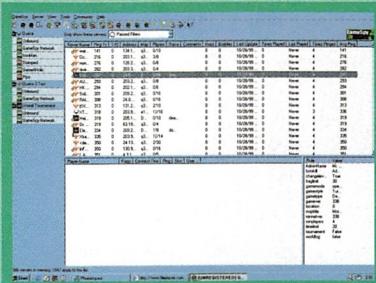
- After the simple installation process you'll have to enter a name into the **player profile**. This is where you come up with an online handle that will strike fear into the hearts of your enemies (note: FluffyBunnySlippers is already taken). Multiple handles are supported.
- Gamespy allows you to personalise game settings via the edit button when the player profile window appears on start up. This can also be accessed later from the **Gamespy/Player Profile** menu. For each game you're able to change settings like auto switching for weapons, team colours and skins.

Once you're happy with the settings, it's time to get into Gamespy's main function - finding a good, fast server.



Server Lists

- Go to the **Tools/Gamespy Updates** menu and update both map information and the master server list. You need to do this about once a month to keep up to date on what servers are where. Initially, once you've got this list you should delete all of the servers you'll probably never use. Connecting to a server in Lithuania, for example, would be pointlessly slow. It's best to screen out any servers not in your region so the master server updates and subsequent refreshes will be quicker.



Gamespy is the ultimate online game management program. 9/10 Quake players recommend it.

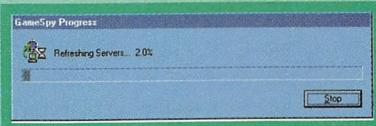
Filters

Gamespy allows you to run the server list through customised filters and even has ready-made 'Tabs' available from its web site to help you organise the servers into different sub-groups. You could, for example, have a group set up for servers that are running Quake II with cheat detection, or one for servers running Capture the Flag games.

Chat

There's also a chat feature built into Gamespy that has a similar interface to programs like IRC. Gamespy is a member of the 3Dnet network and as well as chatting about Gamespy itself on the default #gamespy channel there are channels devoted to just about every popular multiplayer game online. There are also dedicated clan channels where the residents might get a bit edgy and territorial when confronted with a newcomer, but generally the chat service, just like anywhere in the online gaming world, is a great place to travel, meet interesting people and naturally - frag them.

Elton Cane



The Games

Gamespy 3D v2.16 supports all the big first person shooters, from the latest Unreal Tournament Demo to redneck bloodlust action in Deer Hunter 3. Check out the full list: Quake, Quake II, Quake 3, Unreal Tournament, Half-Life, Tribes, Drakan, Kingpin, Redline, Shogo, Sin, Blood 2, Hexen II, Heretic II, Unreal, Turok II, South Park, Descent III, Dark Vengeance, Baldur's Gate, Deer Hunter 3



UNREAL TOURNAMENT™

Unreal™ Tournament™ © 1998 Epic MegaGames and GT Interactive Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved. GT and the GT Games logo are trademarks and the GT logo is a registered trademark of GT Interactive Software Corp. Unreal and the Unreal logo are trademarks of Epic MegaGames. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies. JMWTFPC01 PFTT399.



- ★ Train for combat in Novice mode. Or go Hardcore for even more intense action.



- ★ All-new and enhanced big body-count weaponry - the Redeemer, the IMPACT Hammer and more.



- ★ The most complete and challenging online multi-player experience ever.



- ★ Completely customisable "bots" with superior A.I. "bots" take orders and team up with you.



- ★ A single-player experience like no other - Guide your team to the title of Unreal Grand Master!

- ★ Over 30 unique environments torqued by the Unreal engine.

A groundbreaking new 3d combat experience from the creators of unreal.
[Does not require unreal to play]

A new kind of single-player experience.

A ruthless multi-player revolution.

A team sport for 3D terrorRists everywhere.



AN ALL-NEW STAND-ALONE GROUNDBREAKING SINGLE AND MULTIPLAYER TOURNAMENT GAME.

[Does not require unreal to play.]

Enter the Unreal World Now

- Download the demo at

unreal.gtgames.com

Look for the UNREAL LEVEL PAK.

Available Now.



YET TO BE
CLASSIFIED

www.unreal.com



www.gtgames.com

- demonstration.
- Generating close-up cameras in various Quick Replays.
- Auto Directors starting camera is positioned outside of garage geometry in Interview Mode.
- Auto Director places cameras through the walls.
- The routine is much improved however some marginal clipping might occur in confined areas as cameras pan and dolly.
- LA, under D3D for some types of video cards, some cars have corrupted textures.
- The LevelPatch.exe fixes some collision problems with the New York and L.A. maps.

TRIBES

- 1.9 Patch Update for TRIBES:
- Fixes some server side bugs.

Descent 3 v1.2.0

New features for Version 1.2.0:

- Reduced network traffic in multiplayer games by not sending position packets for dedicated servers, dead players, and observers.
- Additional Pentium III enhancements: motion blur on robots and powerup sparkles.
- Under Linux, service mode (invoked with -service) now works like a true service.
- Secondary weapon fire packets are now sent reliably.
- Added support for EAX 2.0.
- Changed the controller (joystick) code to use by default the Windows API.

Version 1.0.0 used the Windows API, but 1.1.0 used DirectInput. To use DirectInput under 1.2.0, use the “-directinput” command-line option (which does the same thing as the “-alternatejoy” option.) DirectInput should be used with joysticks that don’t work with the Windows API, such as the Wingman Interceptor and other multiple-hat sticks.

Fixes for Version 1.2.0:

- Fixed a minor AI path-following bug.
- Add-on table files now work correctly when pages in the add-on are dependent on other add-on pages.
- Fixed an energy center problem in Entropy games.
- Fixed a problem in CTF games picking up the flag in small rooms.
- F7 no longer crashes when pressed immediately upon joining a netgame.
- Fixed z-buffer rendering problems under OpenGL.
- Fixed an OpenGL problem caused by setting the magnification filter to an invalid setting.
- DMFC is now notified of player damage before the player is killed.
- Fixed a menu problem that showed no ship logo selected when an OAF-format logo was selected.
- Stats are now written to PXO when a server quits.
- Fixed syncing problems in multiplayer when a guided

NGN - Online RPG News

by Lindsey Smith

**ASHERON'S CALL
BETA TEST JOURNAL****Genre:** Online RPG**Players:** 1-TBA**Developer:** Turbine Entertainment**Publisher:** Microsoft**Due:** Early 2000

Asherons call is Turbine Entertainment’s first foray into the ever-growing world of massively multiplayer online role playing gaming. With Ultima Online nabbing 135, 000 subscribers and EverQuest 150, 000

worldwide, does Asheron’s Call have what it takes to entice hardened ORPGers from their established passions? Will it provide some new innovative gameplay features or will it be another Meridian 59 (hah! remember that one?) and fade into obscurity? Resident ORPG junky Lindsey Smith was sent off into the world of Dereth (where EverQuest is set) during the recent beta test to bring us back the word.

**The Blades of Grooming +3: keeps pretentious facial hair in trim****Fierce registration processes**

First impressions last. Prepare then, to sit through an extremely tedious player registration process. Now, online registration systems have never been exactly quick and painless, but this is bordering on the ridiculous. Asheron’s Call’s registration system is perhaps the most convoluted and confusing yet. Perhaps this is Microsoft’s way of sneaking in a “free” adventure - even before you start the game?

When you finally make it into Dereth, you have the option of being transported via Portal Space (a tunnel akin to a Wormhole) to a newbie-only training ground. This is highly recommended, as learning character control and management is an essential part of the adventure. Otherwise, you’ll be likely to find the first few hours of the adventure frighteningly intimidating. Thankfully, the training ground quickly turns even the most inexperienced (or plain dim-witted) fighter into a finely tuned bunny exterminator!

Dereth

The world of Dereth itself is absolutely huge, with sprawling vistas as far as the eye can see. The graphics, while not being overly spectacular, are on par with what EverQuest has on offer. Tis a shame that we’ve yet to see an online RPG with truly exceptional graphics (the imminent Atriarch is on the right track though, as is Origin’s recently announced UO2). The only real complaint is that trees and people can look very blocky and pixelated on occasions. But, as I said, it’s really only a minor gripe. Spell effects are dazzling, with colored lighting and pretty pixels

Deeply embarrassed by his choice of headwear, Nigma the Swift wished the earth would open up and swallow him. Oh, it did.



galore, and with the plethora of spells available in the game (most of which I didn't even discover before the beta ended) you'll never be short of eye candy.

Killer Bunnies

Most disappointing is an almost complete absence of fauna in the aboveground portion of Dereth. Bunnies are evenly spaced in roughly one square kilometer blocks each. Running for hours without seeing any high level monsters is not uncommon. While this may be great for the budding newbie character, bunnies lack any long term challenge. Higher level characters can simply charge about the country side, safe in the knowledge that the only real threat is perhaps a graze on the ankles at the teeth of a righteously pissed rabbit. Oh dear! Run for your lives! In all seriousness, it's these kind of conditions that breed complacency in an ORPG and promote mass player-killer situations.

Thankfully, the dungeons are more than populated, and running through them on a pest control spree can be a very fun experience indeed.

Cool spell system

For the would-be arcane artistes out there, Asheron's Call's magic system is truly unique. It revolves around a component system, in which players must put specific components together in order to discover a spell. Due to the huge range of components and the subtle differences between spell recipes, it should take the typical player a very long time to discover all of the spells available. At the very least,

this system has the potential to really give magic users some long-term challenge. Unfortunately, there's no way of preventing unscrupulous characters from posting these recipes online (such as infamous cyber-junkie DrTwisTer did with very high-level spell combinations), which has mucked up the spell system quite a bit. This system should be revised before Asheron's Call goes live.

Rain down

The Asheron's Call beta ended early November, with a cataclysmic event designed to test the Asheron's Call 'events engine'. It was a spectacular light show in which comets rained from the sky, and several towns were - quite literally - destroyed. The events engine is perhaps the most important aspect of

any ORPG, as complacency or boredom has the potential of ruining a player's enjoyment of the game. One can only hope that more events using this engine will happen in the actual release version of Asheron's Call. At least, the events during the beta showed great promise.

Plenty o' potential

Ultimately, the beta test was an enjoyable affair. Asheron's Call has plenty of potential, providing of course it can distinguish itself from current best-seller EverQuest. With the full version expecting an imminent release, there will be at least three major ORPGs to try out over Xmas. Expect a full review of the game in a coming issue of PC PowerPlay to help you make your decision.

Lindsey "Australis Dragon" Smith



PATCH NEWS

- missile is released.
- Changed the Winsock packet buffer to be 16KB.
- Removed the joystick sample-rate cap mistakenly added in version 1.1.0.

Darkstone v1.0.3 Patch

- With this patch (Version 1.0.3), characters and single player save games are compatible with the previous versions. (However it's possible some objects may disappear from your inventory as we are now checking duplicated objects).
- The network save game is not compatible. (You can load it, but you may have some problems).
- Installation of this patch is irreversible.

What's new about the patch 1.0.3?

- The difficulty level has been increased:
- The monsters open the doors.
- Some of them have new spells (Reflection...)
- Their resistance and their speed movements have been increased.
- Monsters regenerated in dungeons and outside areas (in solo games).
- There is a new difficulty level, "Hero", also playable on the network: (view location)
- It's more difficult.
- New weapons are available.
- Some new character functions have been added:
 - Change of memory spells of the 2nd character with the shortcut key [Shift]+F8
 - Call for help [D] and your 2nd character attacks your closest attacker.
 - The automatic spells for the second character are more intelligent.
 - Characters can now be exported from saved game files from the export option in the game menu. (see below)
 - Stone and confusion weapons effect now 10 seconds long instead of 2s.
 - 2nd character berserk spell casted only if he attacks a monster.
 - New delay between spell casting. Each characters have their own speed of spellcasting, which grows with the level of spell.
- The network has been improved:
- The chat box supports up to 80 characters.
- Chat messages are now visible by the sender.
- The server is able to end the session of another player using "K" followed by the player number.
- In cooperative mode, your character can't be attacked by another player.
- Moving the mouse on a multiplayer character will display his experience level.
- Disconnection(s) problems in tcp/ip fixed.
- This patch will permit you to play with all the different territories worldwide.

PATCH NEWS

- - Less teleportation of monsters in multiplayers sessions.
- Compressed data send at the beginning of a multiplayer session.
- This patch also fixes:
 - The weapon durability problem.
 - Network character ageing prematurely.
 - Irma's identification bug.
 - Monsters' berserk bug.
 - Magic bomb and poison cloud can only be cast on visible monsters.
 - Camera allocated keys can be modified in keyboard.txt.
 - The Export function: (view location)

This feature will allow you to extract character information from a saved game. Load the saved game with the characters you want to extract, then return to the main menu and click 'Export'. Note: This will erase all other characters that were listed prior to using the Export function.

- New command lines:
 - nointro : launch the game without intro sequences. (also added ; when you click during intro sequences it now zaps to the beginning menu.)
 - reversecam : reverse rotation camera keys.

Drakan

Multiplayer Changes / Fixes

- The DirectPlay-based networking code has been replaced with Winsock (TCP/IP and UDP).

- Dedicated server now works under Windows NT 4.0 (SP3).
- Reduction of network bandwidth.
- Better packet aggregation. This feature reduces bandwidth by combining multiple packets into larger, single packets which have less overhead.

• Smarter modem support. The server adaptively avoids bottlenecks by keeping packet flow to a minimum through tight connections like modems.

- Dragon (air) Teamplay now sets all the players on one team to have the same dragon skin (defined by the server admin).
- Added server commands for viewing in-game chat and talking to the players ("chat on/off" and "say MESSAGE").
- Added server commands for changing the timelimit and kills limit in-game ("timelimit SECONDS" and "scorelimit KILLS").

• Fixed long delay in the join-game screen if your computer's DNS settings were not correct. The system will no longer hang while it is looking up the Drakan master server address.

- When joining a team, the scoreboard is now displayed so you can see what players are on each team (and how many).
- Added new rules that the

NGN - Action News

by Elih Brading

TEAM FORTRESS 2 DESIGNER INTERVIEW

Following our Mass Multiplayer feature in PCPP #42, Elih

Brading chats with Team Fortress 2's lead designer (and Aussie ex-patriate),

Robin Walker.

Teamplay isn't exactly an uncommon thing these days. Why should gamers be getting excited about TF2?

Robin: We've spent a lot of our design time figuring out ways to allow players to interact more, and how we can increase the perceived value of that interaction. We've worked with a goal of encouraging players to work as a team because it's fun, and because the other members of your team actually have something to offer you. Classes help out a lot here. No matter what class you are, and how good you are, there'll always be things you can't do without some help from other players playing different classes.

Having more interesting objectives for teams than just capturing flags helps too, because your team might be required to do something that requires multiple-class abilities. There are so many small instances in our design that came from this simple idea of providing the highest level of interaction between players as possible, that I couldn't possibly list them all. But rest assured - appropriate class management will be a discerning factor in a team's success.



Robin Walker - Team Fortress 2's lead designer



What player classes are new to the genre? What additional classes are on offer to spice up the game styles from Team Fortress Classic (TFC)?

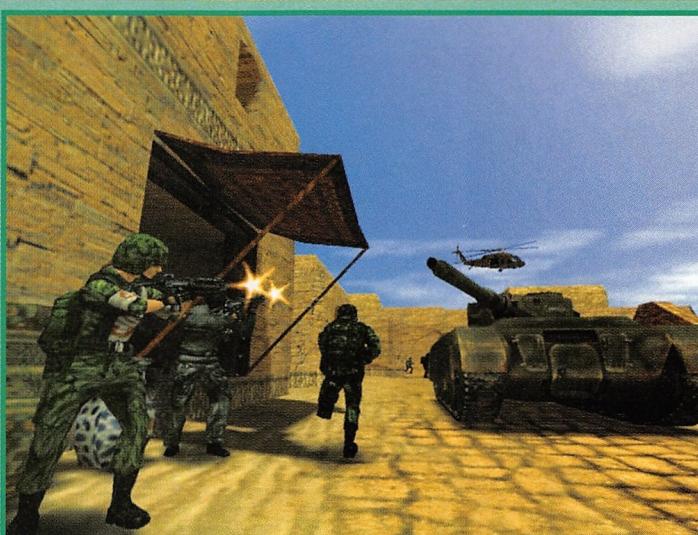
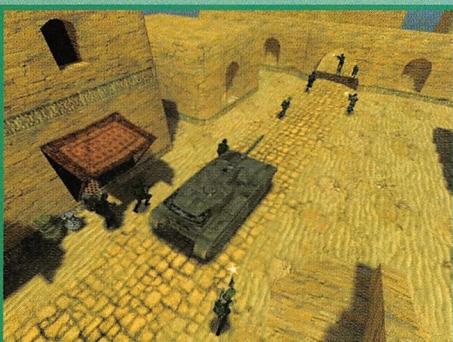
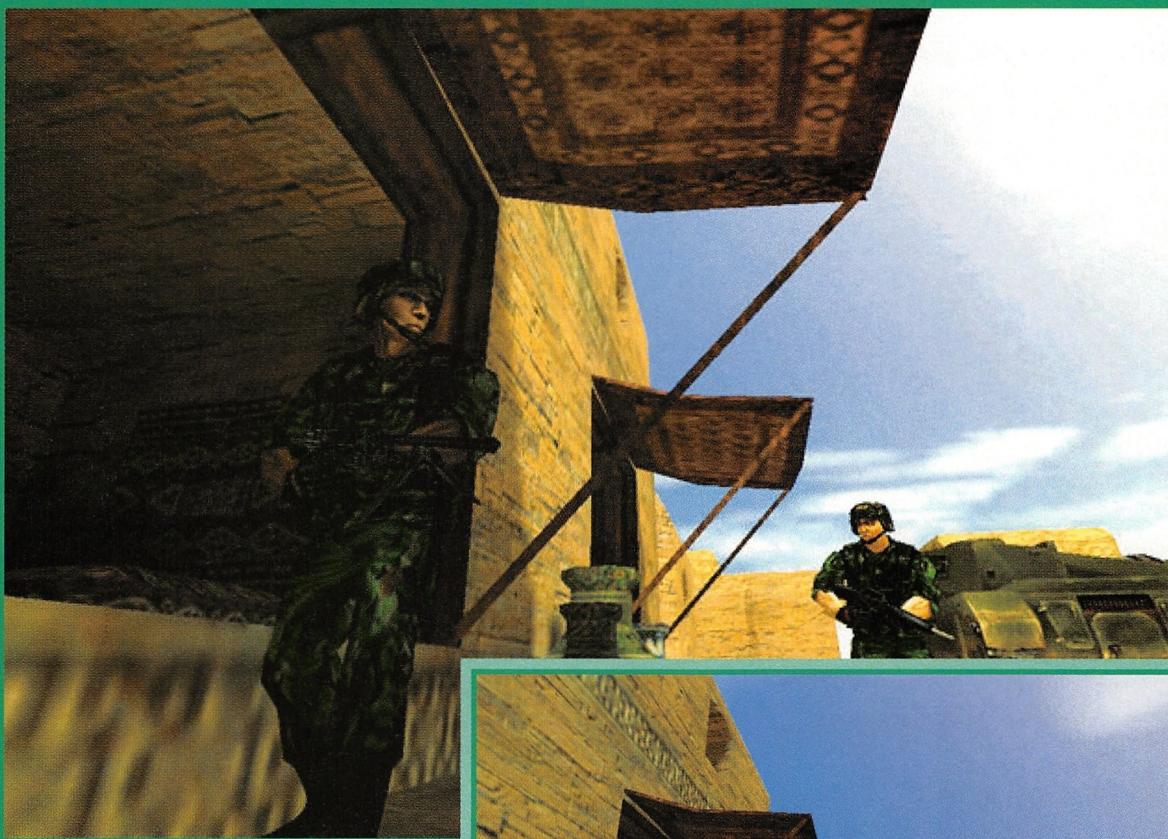
Robin: We went right back to the drawing board when working on our TF2 class design, coming up with a total of 12 classes. Some of them ended up being similar to the TFC classes, but none are identical.

The Officer is one of the new ones and is designed to be the focal point of a squad, because he has a sphere of influence that projects over all his teammates near him, making them more effective in combat. He's also able to see more information about enemy strength, and through it make better decisions about whom the squad should attack. This information can be transmitted in a limited way to his teammates, making him a valuable resource to any squad.

The Commander class is responsible for the entire team's strategy. This class

PATCH NEWS

"sorry, Frank, they're all out at Golden Gaytime's. Would you like a Raspberry Splice instead?"



sees the entire game from above, as if playing a real-time strategy game. He's able to see the entire battle going on below him, and he uses an interface similar to an RTS game to give orders to his teammates. Using Voice technology to talk to his teammates, the Commander is able to put the extra information he has at his fingertips to good use by directing a team's strategy.

There will be troop transport vehicles in TF2. Why have you chosen to include these?

Robin: Basically because it's a lot of fun. We use a lot of the vehicles in the game to ferry large groups of players around, particularly when they're re-spawning. It's a blast to come back into the battle in the back of an APC, with a squad of 3 or 4 others, leaping out while the APC lays down some covering fire to protect your advancement. The vehicles themselves are directed by the Commander class, so

he's able to deploy squads in the areas that they'll be most useful in.

Many FPS now boast advanced animation for the in-game characters, is there anything revolutionary in regards to visual animations in TF2?

Robin: We're forging ahead with a system we've titled Parametric Animation. It's basically a system of blending multiple animations together while the game's running, allowing our characters to move very realistically. Player's bodies move exactly as you'd expect them to, with turning necks, hips, shoulders, and so on.

Besides the much-touted MRM technologies, what other new graphical features are on offer?

Robin: We're pretty excited about our volumetric particle system. (In-game) movies have been using particles for a long time, and it'll be great to be able to

do some of the things that so far have been impossible within the game itself. Making explosions that fill volumes is great for both visuals and gameplay.

Will there be missions (for both single and multiplayer) that are played throughout different times of the day (i.e. dawn/dusk, day/night maps), and, will you offer dynamic time change throughout an ensuing battle?

Robin: We're looking into this right now in fact. It's pretty easy for us to have our maps playable at different times of the day, but dynamic changes throughout the battle is much trickier.

Although the TF2 team are offering the predictable response of "when it's done" to the release question, an early 2000 release seems most likely. We all eagerly await the release of what is shaping up to be a phenomenal multiplayer experience.

- server reports when queried: Number of Teams, and Network (connection) Speed.
- Dedicated server now automatically chooses the Primary Display Adapter. This fixes the crashes when people tried to run a dedicated server on a machine with a Voodoo or other secondary card.
- More layers of mush to prevent cheating (remaining critical holes moved server-side).
- Fixed bug where weapons that people were holding would rarely not be visible to every player.
- Fixed bug where weapons could be given more than once to someone or to multiple people at a spawn point.
- Fixed bug in Master of the Dragon games where the Dragon would sometimes disappear until the level was restarted, or two dragons would appear, or a dead dragon could shoot at you.
- Added 256 color (8-bit) and 24-bit color display support for the dedicated server window.
- Dedicated server now displays the name of the server in the title bar of the window and the build version. The server also now displays max number of players along with the current number of players.
- LEVELLIST now works as a command in the dedicated server.
- Server rules are now sorted alphabetically in the Server Info Screen.
- Fixed bug with not skipping over blank lines when reading the LFL files (it would try to load a NULL level).
- Dedicated server is now more efficient when minimized because it does not have to use CPU for drawing the display.
- Dedicated server now uses much less CPU and can be clamped below a certain update rate. The maximum update rate can be set in the Drakan.cfg or changed with the "maxrate" command. The default is 50 updates per second ("maxrate 50"). Server CPU usage has gone down considerably!
- Fixed bug where the Soul Stone would not get reactivated when it was supposed to.
- Fixed a bug where your player color would get changed to purple if you picked a pure white or gray color.
- Fixed bug with client ports getting mapped incorrectly when playing behind a firewall.

Gameplay and Design Tweaks

- Increased radius and damage on Blue Energy Bow explosion. This will make the bow more effective and useful.
- Fixed Green Energy bow (DragonStrife) so that it seeks from a longer range. This should make it easier to kill the dragon.
- Decreased damage on ring of fire and lightning axe. Good

PATCH NEWS

NGN - Action News

► armors will reduce the damage on these weapons enough to survive them.

General Changes / Fixes

- Better joystick/gamepad support joystick and gamepad axes can now be bound to forward/back, strafe right/left, and up/down (jump/crouch) as well as the existing pitch and turn. Any axis can also be inverted, not just the Y-axis.
- Supports joysticks with trackballs such as the PantherXL. Added new joystick axis binding interface to the Options->Controls screen.
- New 3D benchmarking feature. The output is compatible with benchmarking utilities such as 3D GameGauge.
- An auto save file is now created when you first transition to a level. The file can then be loaded in to allow you to continue from the start of the level.
- Fixed bug where you would sometimes lose crystals when hot keying between weapons.
- Fixed crash that sometimes happened when using items in the inventory.
- Fixed rare crash when loading in saved-games. Your previous saved games (even the ones that crashed before) can be loaded using the patched version.

- Fixed minor level-specific gameplay bugs.
- The boss at the end of the game is now smarter and harder to kill and also now honors the difficulty level.
- Added error message for when DirectDraw cannot be initialized completely (bad DirectX setup).
- Added error message for when the Engine is run in an unsupported color depth for the game, like 256 colors.
- Fixed bug with FOV getting messed up when zoomed in (bow alt attack) and going to any Interface Screen. Now the zoom-in gets turned off when you resume the game.
- Fixed rare crash that happened sometimes when removing a single grouped item from the inventory.
- Fixed several locations in various levels where Arok could get stuck on the ground and was not able to fly.
- Added "nightmare" skill level. Creates attack faster and are more aggressive.
- Fixed crashing problems on the Matrox G400 when the bump-mapping feature is enabled.

Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear Patch -v2.04

- Found and eliminated some bandwidth hogs in multiplayer.
- Fixed the pink areas and bad text on Permedia 2 cards.
- Fixed the crash when playing back a replay that was recorded with AutoRun turned on.
- Fixed a potential lockup if a player jumps off a ledge while AIs are following.
- The "Invert" option on the

Hollywood Alexis

From movie to game and now from game to movie, ADV Films, a Texas-Based film and anime production studio is developing an animated film based on the storyline of Ritual's action-shooter SiN. While SiN would work as a live-action film, ADV worked with a Japanese animation company to create the one-hour film for less than one million dollars, whereas the costs involved in creating a live film could easily run into the tens of millions.

Planned for an early-April 2000 release, the anime will closely follow the storyline set by the original game, with Colonel John Blade, owner and founder of the private police force that investigates the futuristic towns transmogrifications. He traces the mutations back to Sinclaire, the sexy scientist with a beautiful body and an extensive knowledge of biochemistry.

The film will be released on both VHS and DVD, with the DVD version also including a copy of the full game.

Fee Fi Fo Fum, a Large Delay is to come

Giants, the action game (whose multiplayer aspect has had NGN enraptured since its announcement) developed by Planet Moon Studios (the makers of MDK) has been officially delayed until sometime in the year 2000.

"Yes, we have moved the release date



NGN Mod of the Month

UT Mutators

<http://deconstruct.terrafusion.com/>

The open-source architecture of many of today's games makes it easy to modify the contents to deliver an entirely new package. Unreal Tournament (and its demo) support a new feature called "mutators," making it exceptionally simple to modify the game's contents, rules and parameters. It is a similar way of game editing to what was made available through the sun.ini file in Tiberian Sun.

The net is already thriving with these user-created entities, most of which change the configurations for weapons and visual effects. This month, the PC PowerPlay team had the most fun with the following five:

- Team Colour Insta-Gib** - team colour Insta-Gib changes the colour of the trail that extends from your enhanced shock rifle to that of your chosen team colour. It's a useful mod that is essential for anyone who gets into the teamplay variant.

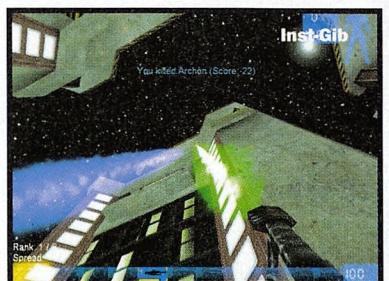
2) Half-Pint - Think: Mini-Me "with laser-beams attached." This mod halves the size of your character, while retaining the same in-game physics. The player view is shown from a third person perspective, with players seeming like little Mini-Me speed running machines.

3) Control Team - the Control Team mutator is built around one simple ammunition type: bullets. This mod allows you to use only enforcers and the minigun - an extremely enjoyable slaughter fest.

4) Boing-Boing - changes none of the in-game physics, only adding unlimited jumpboots to your arsenal. This allows you to quickly get to inaccessible areas and allows for damage-less rocket jump-type moves.

5) Giants - Giants is an interesting mutator in that it adjusts the size of your physical character based on the number of times you die or the number of frags you gain. Kill someone and you grow in size, die and you shrink to an almost-anorexic state.

Votes are based on enjoyment, not



features or options. You can vote for your favourite mutator by mailing ngn@pcpowerplay.next.com.au

PATCH NEWS

► joystick remapping screen should work correctly now.

- Fixed auto-aim being turned on when the player attempts to switch teams during the early stages of a death motion.

- Players who join while a game is ongoing no longer send their arm patches immediately but rather wait for the next game to start. This fixes the problem of players joining during the action causing a lag for everyone.
- Added a new multiplayer only map called "Bunkers".
- Fixed the short freeze that occurred when selecting "Mission Orders" from the briefing screen.

- Replaced "Ready To Continue" messages on multiplayer results screens with ready indicator in player list.
- Server can force the game to continue past the results screen after a multiplayer game instead of waiting for all players to click continue by pressing the forward arrow a second time.

- Disable the observer mode key when running a replay.
- Kick out terrorists in terrorist hunt / lone wolf farther if they are in the same room as the insertion zone / base. If they are in a different room, they can be anywhere. This reduces the incidents of terrorists starting off right in the team's face.
- Adjusted which weapon skill was used at what zooms. Full submachinegun zoom now uses full assault skill, instead of using a bit of sniper skill.
- Als will now call "Clear!" once they have cleared a room.

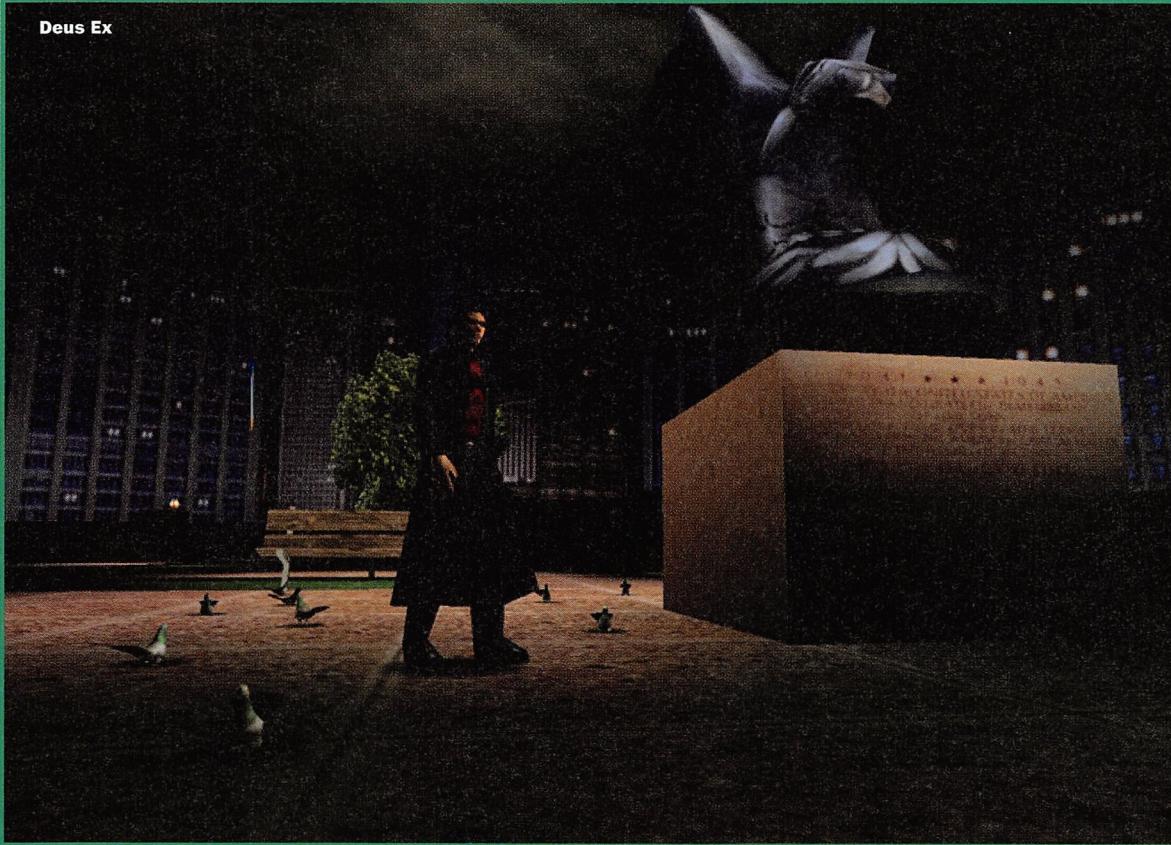
- Changed the Steyr AUG to use the rifle reticle to stop confusing players.
- Removed the intermediate zoom level on the G36K.

- Changed the "if you are zoomed, you can't walk" to be "if you are zoomed more than an MP-5 can zoom, you can only walk". This is 3X.
- Loosened some of the server-side gunshot validation checks to lessen the penalties for high-ping players.

- Improvements to the camera code to eliminate some cases of the camera being outside of the world after dying.
- Added support for Creative's EAX.DLL so more players can get EAX effects.
- Improved the support for foreign keyboards in the remapping screen by detecting keys that are in a different location from a US keyboard.
- The forced time delay between trigger pulls is no longer increased if you are wounded.

- Character scaling in the X and Z directions is now capped between 0.1 and 1.0 to avoid a cheat that allowed players to run faster than they should.
- The Rommel.CXP file now goes through the mod system properly so it can be edited as part of a mod.

Deus Ex



to sometime in the year 2000. We have not finalised a specific date yet," revealed Bob Stevenson, Co Art/Design Director of Planet Moon Studios.

"With Giants, we want to accomplish everything that we set out to do. I think any team out there who is committed to making ambitious original games is experiencing delays of some kind or another. It's seems to be the nature of the beast."

"Anyway, the game is going very well. We just hired a new programmer, Jim Mazrimas (one of the lead programmers on Slave Zero). That increases the size of Planet Moon up to a whopping 7 people."

With an extremely small development team in relation to most other game developers, the delay isn't exactly surprising. But geez! Get it out already! We wanna play it!

Multiplayer Ex-Ecutable

Back in Issue 41, our interview with Warren Spector, developer and designer behind the real world thriller Deus Ex, revealed that there was "no way in hell" that multiplayer was going to happen. Three months and many meetings later, the announcement has been made that "even if all we [Ion Storm] can do is deathmatch, then you bet your ass we're gonna do it".

Deathmatch itself has already been implemented and is being tested alongside the rest of the development of the game, according to the team. They're also currently toying around with the inclusion of multiple game modes. Damage and weaponry modification models are also being discussed.

Ion Storm are keen to stress the fact that Deus Ex has been designed as an engrossing singleplayer experience first and foremost, and while the possibilities of multiplayer are now high, the inclusion of co-operative play is not at all set in stone.

Well, fingers crossed!

NGN Game Master

Email gm@pcpowerplay.next.com.au, generously with any online/multiplayer related questions.

Don't know the difference between a modem and a blender? Can't make sense of the setup ritual usually associated with playing online? Just ask Elih - NGN's resident Game Master.

Freaking Mutants

I've downloaded some of the various UT Mutators that are available on the net, but I'm yet to get them working. I've tried making folders with the mod name and copying the files in there, but to no avail. How can I get these little trinkets cranking? I need some mutated madness!

CRC - Internet

Most of the mutators you downloaded will be self-extracting *.umod files. If you double click on the file, a setup screen will ask you where you wish to install the file. Extract the Unreal Module to your Unreal Tournament directory. To load the desired mutator, you need to load UT and select game->start practice session. Click on mutators, and then double click on the mutator you wish to load. Close the mutator screen and begin the game - the module should play successfully.

You can download UT Mutators

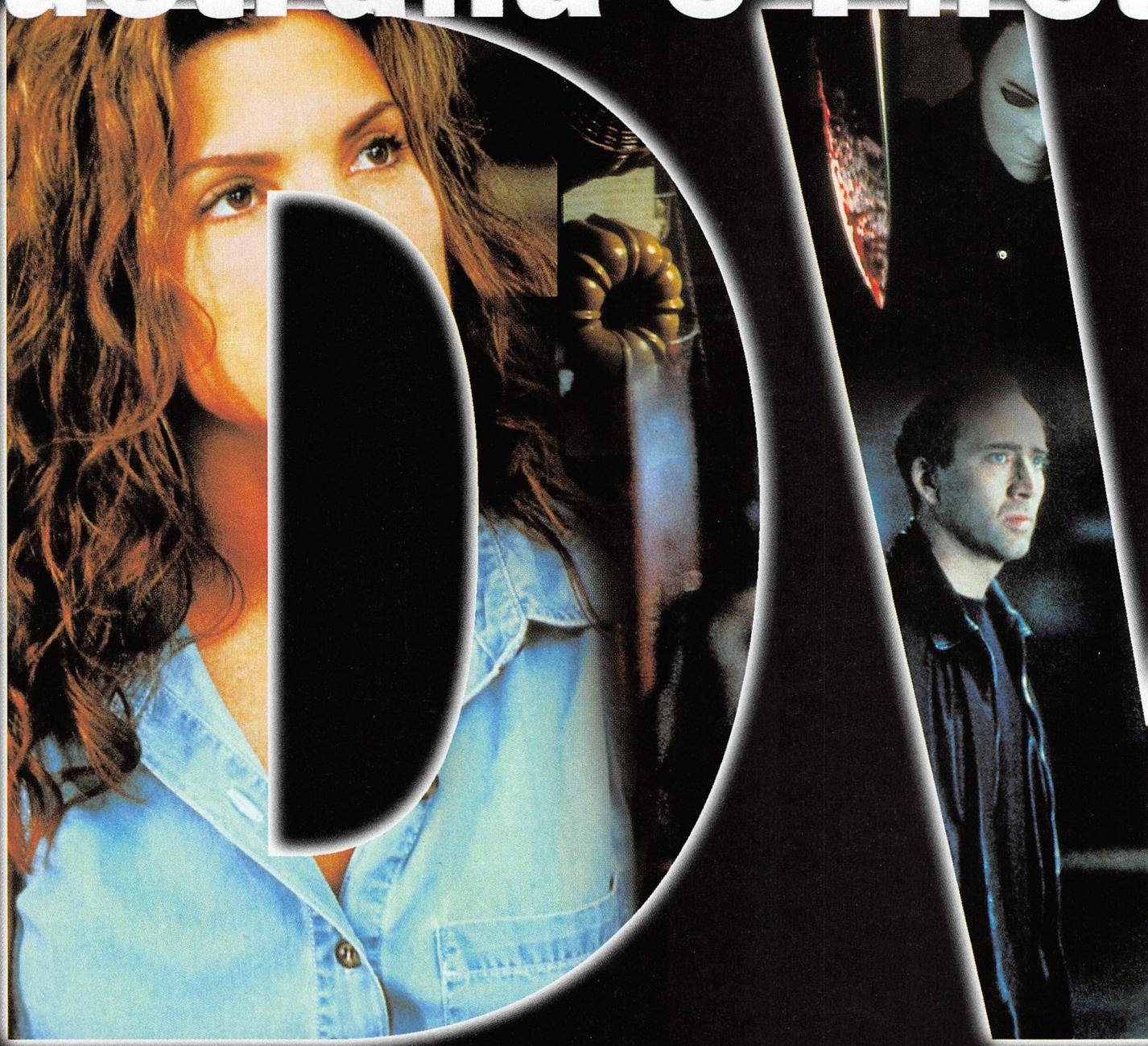


from the sites below:

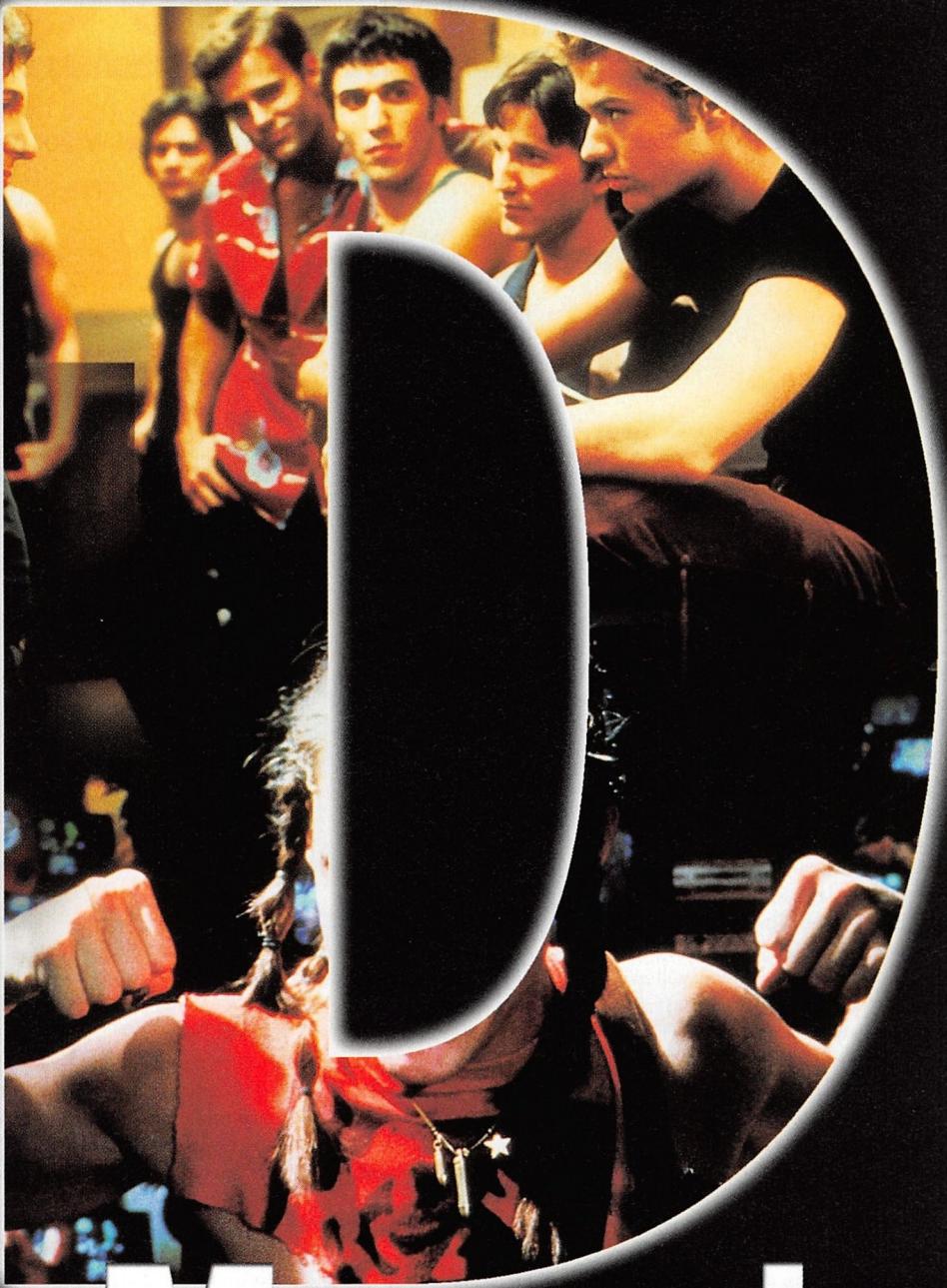
www.planetunreal.com/modcentral/mutators/

www.planetunreal.com/mutation/

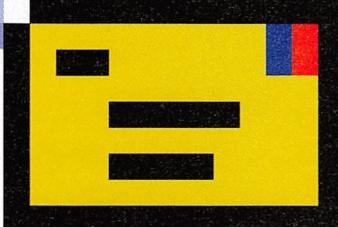
Australia's First



COMING



Magazine
SOON!



IN-BOX

Letters Tip #4: While we appreciate the passion, letters written in blood scare us. Please don't do it.

WRITE TO: PC PowerPlay Letters, Level 6, 418A Elizabeth St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010. letters@pcpowerplay.next.com.au

Byte Size

Maybe it's my sadistic female side emerging, but I think it's natural instinct to inflict pain in that region.

Chantal Ingram, Email

Have you met the Castr8tor?

Just Two Players

After reading your most recent issue (#42 - life, the universe and everything, monthly) the second time through, I have begun to notice some possibly important features in multiplayer-style games that are slowly becoming missing as graphics and the internet become more enhanced. Not single-player mode (although I do miss that feature often - thank goodness for older games I suppose), but the playability of games when it's just you and a mate wanting to have a computer day. We must resort to play Quake 2 co-op for any team-style play because games like Team Fortress can't be played DECENTLY with just two players. Why have SOME (I can't forget Looking Glass' soon-to-come Thief 2 game) gaming companies suddenly decided to abandon the two player co-op versus the computer in a storyline style game, for something that requires a multitude of people to even be considered a good game to play? If this pattern continues, virtually all FPSs will have the requirement: "Needs at least FIVE players, internet and/or network card". Which means four of your mates (who all have computers that meet the other requirements on the side of the box) need to buy the game in order to just play it.

William Owyong, Email

The FPS market is in a process of fragmentation, as developers experiment with different styles. Your best bet for co-op play currently lies with more tactical titles like Rogue Spear, Hidden & Dangerous and System Shock 2 rather than the all-out action of Quake and Unreal Tournament. It's still a niche concern, perhaps, but there are some great games out there that fit the bill.



"No, no, no. Aim a little higher or you'll shoot off your other foot."

Black Scientists

Can anybody tell me why games these days are racist? I mean, what's the last game you've seen that has a negro main character? Or an asian one? The only games I can think of that do this are Half-Life with its black scientists, Kingpin with its jiggy niggas (*Hmm... - Ed*) in da hood, and the black TF2 soldiers. I was really disappointed when the System Shock 2 demo came and I could not find a black corpse anywhere, let alone an asian one. Same goes for Unreal Tournament (even though not released), you said in your review that there were over 150 skins on the CD, yet I didn't see a single screenshot that had an ethnic skin in it! I mean, the human race is not all white skin and blue eyes, so let's see some more minorities in games!

Chad Parkhill, Email

It's a good point you make, Chad. The majority of games are created - and, it must be said, played - by white males, so it's understandable that this social demographic would be reflected in the majority of game characters. Same thing with pretty much every entertainment medium that is produced and consumed largely by western countries. Wasn't it odd to hear the Prince of Persia talking in an American accent in Pop3D?

Quite A Crappy Letter

Most people that write letters are either sucking up to you to get a ("six-pack of Jolt and a t-shirt" - *Ed*), or just want something else. To be honest, my friend's older brother works at Harvey



JOLT COLA Letter of the Month

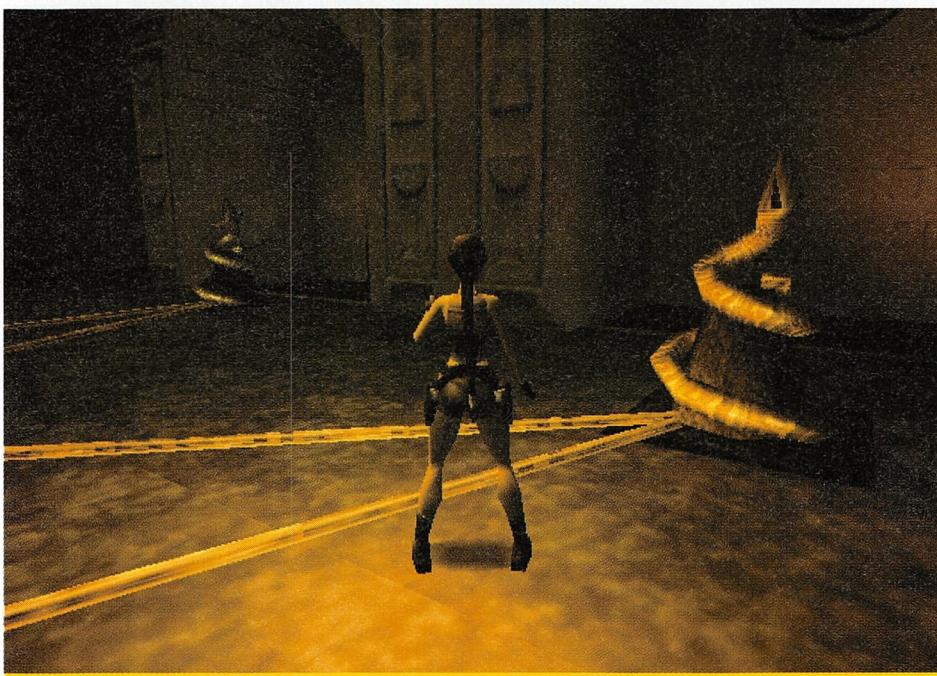
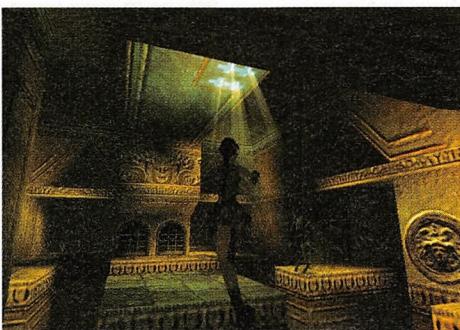
A six-pack and Jolt t-shirt for...

Crippled at the Peak

Recently I was reading PCPP#47 and I was reading your review of "Extreme Lawn Bowls 2000" and I noticed that you gave it 89%. I myself as a former state champion lawn bowler sadly crippled at the peak of my career by a total hip replacement, found your review uninformed and an inaccurate evaluation of the game. "Extreme Lawn Bowls 2000" is undeserving of 89%, as it does not accurately portray the lawn bowl experience. After I spent most of my weekly pension on the game I was horrified to discover that the game I had bought was a cheap arcade-style game such as you might find down in a local games parlour. It doesn't even have the official World Association of Lawn Bowls license and has none of the great modern players of the game that we have all come to know and love. PCPP you owe it to your older readers to assess games correctly, as it is not such an easy trip to the local games store with a debilitating hip injury.

Disgruntled Octogenerian, Email

#15	Euro 96	81
#39	European Air War	90
#40	Everquest	85
#8	Evidence	94
#31	Extractors	90
#17	Extreme Assault	49
#38	Extreme Games	30
#22	Extreme Lawn Bowls 2000	88
#7	Extreme Tactics	#1
F-16	F-16	60
F-22 Lightning 2	F-22 Lightning 2	89
F-22 Raptor	F-22 Raptor	61
F/A-18 Hornet 3.0	F/A-18 Hornet 3.0	27
F1 Manager	F1 Manager	80
F1 Racing Sim	F1 Racing Sim	74
F22 Aggressor	F22 Aggressor	#22
F22 ADF	F22 ADF	78
F22 ADF: Rea Sea	F22 ADF: Rea Sea	75
F22 Lightning 3	F22 Lightning 3	#16
Fable	Fable	79
FA18 E Carrier Strike	FA18 E Carrier Strike	#22
Falcon	Falcon	87
		#21
		85
		#27



Tomf Ramier: Can we publish a picture of Lara that isn't exploitative?

Norman and gets leftover mags for free, so he gives them to my friend. But my friend doesn't like them much, so he gives them to me. So I don't really buy your mag (though I have a few times). I do have to say it's good.

My life totally sux. I have no reason at all whatsoever to write this letter to you. I just want to say that all the people writing letters to PCPP out there some of your letters are stupid, pointless and you're wasting your life. Please do not point out that this is also quite a crappy letter, but I do not have a life.

Mark Pickles, Email

The next issue's out on January 12. BUY IT.

With Oversized Text

I'm writing in response to the letter "Gorgeous Effects" from "Phoenix" in PCPP#42. Phoenix, you have absolutely nothing to worry about in relation to the new console known as the Dreamcast. There is simply no way it could match the usefulness of the PC. I've had the fortune - or should I say misfortune - to see the Dreamcast running the internet. What can I say? Pathetic! Running in 640x480, with oversized text, and unable to visit

Byte Size

Don't you just hate it when someone leaves a bowl of water under the tap and you turn it on and water comes whooshing up!

RacCooned, Email

We don't buy that lame excuse for a second.

Byte Size

I work as the 'computer person' in a modelling agency. Yes, I am a female gamer who does not have any friends who even know how to switch a computer on. Yes, they may all look good, but when it comes down to conversation, I have to resort to your magazine. It's the best friend I ever had in two years.

Kathy E, Email

Hey Kathy, could you email March? He'd like your phone number...

Jack Banh, Email

Guilty as charged. We used an image of Lara to promote an issue that had Lara on the cover and a review of her Last Revelation inside. We are truly, deeply sorry.

Complete With Fold Out

It is the 10th of October and I have just been to my local newsagent thinking it was time to buy the October issue of PC PowerPlay. However, to my surprise, I found the November issue on the stand, with the October issue nowhere to be seen. So I checked another newsagent. Again the same thing.

What happened to the practise of releasing November's issue at the beginning of November? How can you possibly release it a full month early and expect it to be up to date?

As a side issue, the November issue which I purchased (after not being able to find the October issue) had an advert for a forthcoming PC PowerPlay Hot Hardware Guide, which it said would be "Out in October". Being the November issue I think it should probably have read "Out Now"?

I have also noticed a complete lack of writing on Prince of Persia 3D, which with many of the magazine staff being "old timers" would (I thought) have been on their wish list. However no mention in the November issue, no review in the reviews index, and it has been on the shelves of Toys 'R Us in Perth for at least a couple of weeks now, complete with fold out cover, a la Halflife.

Just a suggestion but I think you should stick to releasing months in the issue in which they are titled, not six weeks earlier.

Jason Bailey, Email

Okay, the short explanation: publishing science. The longer version would point out that it makes absolutely no difference what date is on the cover, what's inside would be exactly the same regardless. You're not being short-changed simply because "someone" chose to put November on the cover instead of October. Our Prince of Persia 3D review, for example, would not have appeared any earlier if the issue that carried it had been labelled November rather than December. We know it's a little confusing, but really there's no need for concern.

He Made BASIC

I must ask, what's wrong with Microsoft? How come so many people hate Bill Gates? Do you realise where we would be without Bill Gates? Well, we certainly wouldn't be here. I think he deserves to be so rich, do you know how hard it would have been to use computers back when he made BASIC, the language the BIOS uses, when he made DOS. Without Microsoft we wouldn't have DirectX which brings us games twice as fast,

Byte Size

Who the hell needs Lara Croft? Where can I get a life-size version of Sophitia from Soul Caliber?

The Kha'ri, Email

Who's your favourite game babe? Write in and tell us now

that look twice as good and will run on almost any computer. So what if Bill Gates is a rich nerd, that's what I want to be when I grow up, I know 5 languages already. All those Microsoft haters can go off to their OS/2 and crap old games and I'll stay here, playing Motocross Madness on my DirectX compatible 3d card.

Ben Lansdell, Email

You'll find it was actually Rainbow Studios who were responsible for Motocross Madness. Bill's probably never even played it.

Something Dead Difficult

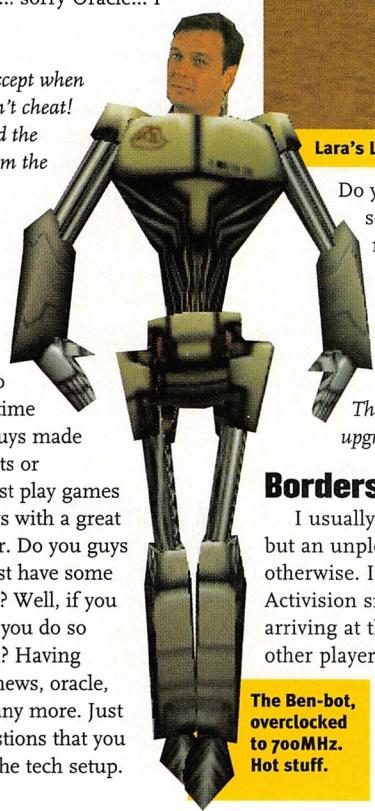
Being a mature female gamer (are we that rare a species "Glued my eyelids"? And not forgetting a hug for "Chivalrous Demonman" PCPP#42) I was beginning to wonder if my age (not my sex "Selvo" PCPP#40) was causing me to lose my edge in games. What a relief it was to read your excellent reviews of Age of Empires 2, BraveHeart, Jagged Alliance and System Shock 2 and find the words, difficult, confusing, complex and overwhelming. These are all great games, but maybe they are putting so much detail into them they have turned them into hard lessons and spoilt some of the fun. I hope it does not get to be a trend like in some of the older games where they started out easy and put something dead difficult and annoying just at the end. Anyone remember the jester that threw things at you in Quest for Glory 1? Having had to start out with early tech and type in text to play, I am all for the latest advances. But, please let us have some choice of difficulty level, like in Tex Murphy games... or sob... sorry Oracle... I will have to cheat!

B.Ibberson, Email

Hard games are great - except when you suck at them. But don't cheat! Embrace the dark side and the Oracle will banish you from the adventurer's realm for eternity!

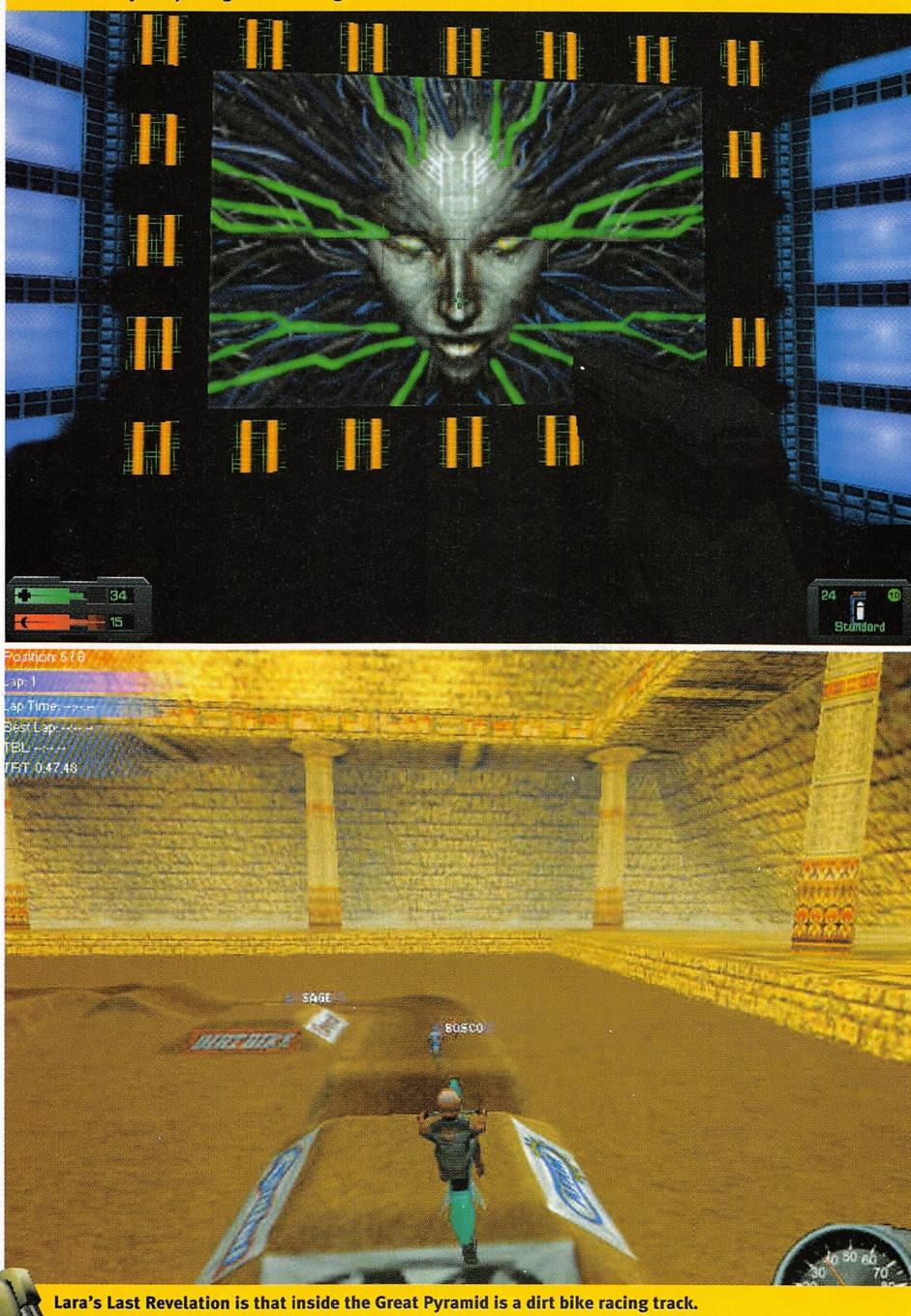
Overclock Yourselfs

I have a question that I've been wanting to ask you guys for a long time ago. It is what are you guys made with? Are you guys robots or something? You guys just play games all day then write reviews with a great human sense of humour. Do you guys need to sleep at all or just have some potion of energy instead? Well, if you guys are robots, how do you do so many things in a month? Having previews, reviews, tech news, oracle, NGN, interview, and many more. Just imagine how many questions that you guys get in a month in the tech setup.



**The Ben-bot,
overclocked
to 700MHz.
Hot stuff.**

SHODAN: Every computer geek's dream girl.



Lara's Last Revelation is that inside the Great Pyramid is a dirt bike racing track.

Do you guys overclock yourselves or something for having such a great mag. Well, nice to have a letter in anyway. Keep up all ya great works mate, if you guys know how to upgrade yourselves, can you please teach me?

IcyMan, Email

Three words. Big. Hard. Disks. The only upgrade you'll ever need.

Borders on racism

I usually don't write in to letters columns, but an unpleasant experience forced me to do otherwise. It happened when I logged onto the Activision site to play Heavy Gear II. Upon arriving at the lobby I was confronted by four other players who proceeded to ignore and deter any efforts I made to communicate or engage them. Now I know some people are not nice, but their behaviour just galls me and I just

can not let this experience go unnoticed. If the creators of Heavy Gear had intended for a select group to only play their game they would never had incorporated internet capability. The only reason for such behaviour was perhaps because I am a internet Heavy Gear rookie and was not worthy of being noticed or accepted. This behaviour borders on racism because the basic principal of it is that you only accept those you deem worthy and exclude everyone else.

Matthew Wong, Email

Multiplying over the net can often be an intimidating or frustrating experience for first-timers. One way to combat the kind of problems you encountered is to do exactly what they did to you: hook up with a few friends and arrange an exclusive game. If you can LAN it, then all the better.

Aren't Any Parts

I'm writing to say where are all the adventure games going? I don't mean RPG or

Doesn't blow: Grim Fandango



Action/Adventure I mean full-on adventure. I don't know if many people know about it, but Dog Day by Asylum came out around last year and my word it isn't an easy game. My favourite all time adventure is Grim Fandango. The good part is that there aren't any parts where you're timed or you have to fight to the death. I mean there is a difference between Lara Croft and Manny Calavera: one goes around blowing everything that moves while the other solves puzzles in the land of the dead. Think about it.

Byron, Email

We will, Byron. After reading your letter our collective mind has been unable to shake the image of Lara "blowing everything that moves"...

Go Up or Ddown

I was reading your November issue (PCPP#42) and my ears pricked (*Were you reading aloud, then? - Ed*) when I read the letter "Overheads are Static". In this letter, Gavin Scaman wrote that the sales tax on computer software would go from 0.41% 10%. This is distressing, but what I found more distressing was the thought of the already extravagant PC hardware prices going up. Could you please shed some light on this? Will prices of hardware go up or down under the GST?

I would also just like to make a suggestion for an inclusion in your magazine. I would like to see a page, if that's possible, with a list of the release dates for ALL games coming out in the next 2-3 months. I know that you have your preview section with when the game is going to come but sometimes these games are still months off and dates can change (as we found with ("game title deleted" - *Revisionist Ed*)).

Jason Derby, Greenwood WA

While we understand why some sort of release schedule may seem like a good idea, that final point you raise is actually a pretty strong reason against doing it. Release dates are notoriously inaccurate, not to mention difficult to obtain. Any page devoted to them would be impractical to put together and run the risk of being a waste of time.

As for the GST, it is obviously an important and complex issue. Computer software and computer hardware are presently taxed at different rates, so the effect of a GST won't be the same for both. We're currently looking at doing a feature on it in the near future - stay tuned.

Byte Size

I could write a letter. I chose not to.

Jake Jarrett, Email

It might have been best for all concerned if you'd stuck to that decision, Jake.

Babylon 5: The Fans Speak

You are no doubt aware of the recent restructuring of Sierra, which resulted in the loss of 105 jobs, and the cancellation of several game titles. This open letter is being sent in an attempt to save one of the most anticipated of those titles, Babylon 5: Into the Fire, a space combat simulator of great potential.

Sierra has claimed to have done extensive marketing research before cutting this title. While we do not dispute that research was done, we believe the results were somewhat flawed. Many of us are registered owners of several Sierra products. We frequent the Sierra website. But none of us recall being asked our thoughts on this cancellation via email, website poll, or snail mail newsletter... we simply weren't part of the equation.

We feel that B5:ITF should be picked up and finished by another publisher for a plethora of reasons... some of the most valid are presented below:

1. Extendability - The B5 engine was designed to be used repeatedly, with an easily upgraded or replaced infrastructure. This means that add-ons and sequels could be produced at minimal cost, and the engine could be easily used to create totally unrelated titles as well, also at greatly reduced development costs.

2. Marketability - Despite the problems associated with the show, the fanbase for Babylon 5 continues with undiminished fervour. As well as enjoying tremendous sales to B5 fans, a space combat simulator of this scope would enjoy sales to non-B5 fans who enjoy simulation titles such as X-Wing Alliance, Battlecruiser 3000 AD (from Interplay, not Take2), Freespace, and other related titles. This is not a 'niche' title in the sense of being attractive *only* to B5 fans... it could have tremendous marketability elsewhere, as well. The words 'Makers of Babylon 5: Into the Fire' would fit well on any other game's box.

3. Consumer Relations - The gaming industry is showing more and more tendency to look toward the bottom line than the consumer base...as evidenced by Sierra's recent actions. This trend is souring more and more of the considerable 'die-hard gamer' demographic.

While we're sure that hunting titles and PC casino games have their market, we're also sure that it's not the market most of us fall into. We need to see that there are still publishing houses out there that *want* our business, and listen to what *we* have to say... even if we're wrong. Investing in this title not only garners the publisher what we think would be a respectable marketing and profit tool, but also garners them something else: our *respect*... something that would continue to be shown through our buying power.

This letter has already grown long, but we think you can see our resolve in this matter. We *urge* you to consider negotiations with Sierra for the purchasing of all code and materials relating to this title; as well as acquiring the original development team to finish it. We feel it's a wise move for any game publisher, and will satisfy our desire to play what promised to be one of the shining titles of its time. Please, do not let this work die unseen. We thank you for your time and attention, and look forward to your decisions.

Michael D. Hunt

Concerned member of the gaming public



Bye-bye Babylon.

I feels like a total betrayal. I learned this morning that Sierra had cancelled Babylon 5: Into the Fire (their upcoming space combat sim) and it was as though my legs had been knocked out from underneath me. As a fan of both Babylon 5 and the space combat genre in general, it was truly a blow that the game I had been looking forward to for so many months had just been screwed up and tossed in the bin by penny-pinching Sierra executives. The game itself has been in development for over 2 years now, and is just a few months from completion. Yet it was determined to be a prime candidate for execution. To me that just sounds like idiocy. If that much time and money was spent on a project, why throw it away? Let's assume that Babylon 5 wasn't going to make any money when it hit the shelves, wouldn't it still make better sense to finish it, and at least try to recoup some of the money invested in it? B5:ITF wasn't the only game to get the chop, but in my humble opinion it was certainly the most noteworthy, and will be the most sorely missed by the gaming community.

My own disappointment aside, what about the 105 Sierra employees who also lost their jobs in the process? Some of whom were relocated by Sierra just a short while before. This is just a total shambles. All over the net now, there are vocal groups of fans rallying to force Sierra to see the error of their ways. Not that it will help, as Marc Hudgins, the games Art Director himself said; "Any protests should go anywhere other than Sierra/Havas - they don't care." I remember the early days fondly, when Sierra was nurtured to life by Ken and Roberta Williams, King's Quest, Space Quest, Police Quest and Leisure Suit Larry. It was all I played. Sierra grew and was strong, and although it seemed like they hadn't done anything for a while, suddenly there was Half-Life in all its splendour. Someone did something right.

Someone at Sierra decided to give Valve money. It was good judgement. What happened to decisions like that? I think now Sierra have exhibited extremely poor judgement. B5:ITF was one of their most hyped titles. From the touted support for the Athlon processor, to enormous battles, to a TRUE physics model for inertial space combat and just plain stunning visuals, the spin doctors at Sierra created a huge fanbase - large enough to ensure its retail success. But now ultimately that's going to backlash. For with the killing of this project all those fans who were fed a steady diet of beautiful screenshots and sterling promises, all Sierra will hear now is a thunderous cacophony of angry voices. Mine will be amongst them.

Dan Crone, Email

COMPETITIONS

GABRIEL KNIGHT III

6 COPIES OF THE GAME

Jane Jensen's Gabriel Knight adventure series has reached its third chapter in Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned. To be honest, it's surprising the eponymous Mr Knight has managed to last so long. Not because the games haven't been any good - in fact the opposite is true, as they've supplied Sierra with its three best adventure games. No, it's because Gabe has encountered so many serial killers, zombies, werewolves and vampires, it's remarkable he's not actually dead. GKIII, of which we've got six to give away, continues the tradition with a tale that explores the history and mythology of the Knight Templar.

Q. Who was the first Grandmaster of the legendary Templar Knights?

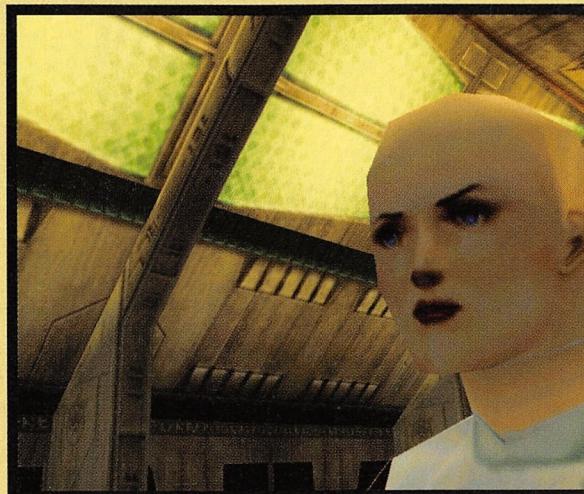


OMIKRON: THE NOMAD SOUL

6 COPIES OF THE GAME

So many games pass through the PCPP offices that we tend to become a little blasé about the really good stuff. Just how damn good The Nomad Soul is can be indicated by the large and very excited crowd (including staffers from our sister mags here at Next) that gathered around the PC every time we loaded it up. Or is it because they just wanted to see the hero, Kay'l, jump into bed with his spunky girlfriend only a mere five minutes into the game? A great game, then, for fans of action/adventuring, David Bowie, science fiction, and scantily-clad girls (and boys) alike. And if that doesn't convince you to enter this competition, nothing will.

Q. List the names of all the personas adopted by David Bowie throughout his music career.



RAINBOW SIX: ROGUE SPEAR

6 COPIES OF THE GAME

We've neither seen nor heard Major Des so ecstatically happy than after he reported back from his tour of duty playing Rogue Spear. And with good reason, too. The sequel to Rainbow Six is pretty much everything the first game should have been. Vastly improved AI, missions situated amidst a wider variety of locations and tense situations, and heaps more guns, all assist in making Rogue Spear the greatest first-person, squad-based, tactical shooter around. Brilliant in multiplayer as well, so it makes sense to enter this comp with all your friends.

Q. What is the motto of the SAS?



WHERE TO SEND

Write the answer, along with your name and address on the back of an envelope. Tip: Don't forget to put the competition name on the front of the envelope.

All entries close January 4th.

Send to:

<competition name>
PC PowerPlay
78 Renwick St.
Redfern NSW, 2016

ISSUE 42 WINNERS

COMMAND & CONQUER:

TIBERIAN SUN

Q. Before James Earl Jones became a well known actor, and brought Darth Vader to life with his powerfully distinct voice, what condition did he suffer from?

A.. James Earl Jones had such a severe stutter that for eight years he refused to talk and was functionally mute.

C. Dorward, North Lambton NSW

N. Ivetic, Kangaroo Flat VIC

H. Robert-Dodds, Petersham NSW

A. Johnson, Sherwood QLD

A. Hough, Connells Point NSW

J. Kahn, Brighton QLD

N. Matolytsch, Narre Warren, VIC

S. Bryce, Tanunda SA

K. Woods, Ceduna SA

D. Roberts, Granton TAS

AGE OF EMPIRES II

Q. What is a female elephant called?

A. A Cow.

J. Bell, Bluewater QLD

D. Davies, Perth TAS

B. Forbes, Cabramatta NSW

C. Davis, Braeside VIC

D. Rider, Tolga QLD

L. Ridge, Ceduna SA

G. Sjollema, Weston ACT

E. Thomas, Donvale VIC

T. Strangeraven, Montrose VIC

J. Hayes, Oaklands Pk SA

SYSTEM SHOCK 2

Q. Just what exactly is this odd looking object?

A.. A 5.25 inch floppy disk.

A. Keunen, Werribee VIC

D. Gray, Picton WA

B. Dwyer, Henley Beach Sth SA

R. Bird, Darlington NSW

J. Hobbs, Runcorn QLD

R. Brian, Hawthorn VIC

REVIEWS: ULTIMA ASCENSION, FIFA 2000, THE WHEEL OF TIME, RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 2000, BATTLEZONE 2
AND YOUR SECOND CHANCE TO VOTE IN THE GAME OF THE YEAR AWARDS!



COMING IN PC PowerPlay

PCPP #45 ON SALE JANUARY 12 2000



REVIEWED

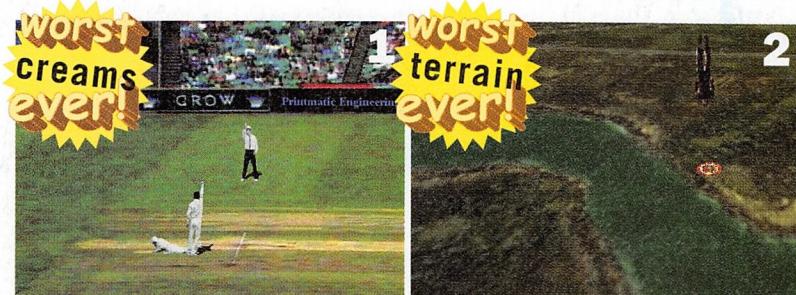
QUAKE III: ARENA

To complement our Game of the Century feature we now present to you...

WORST GAMES OF ALL TIME!

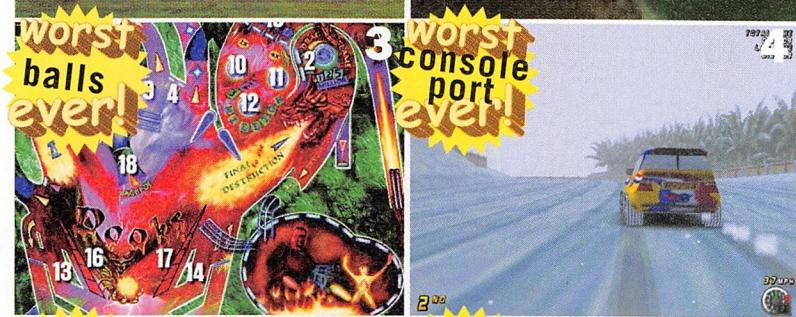
1. Howzat!

Cricket already makes for a boring enough game without removing every single interesting aspect - you know, the batting, bowling and fielding, little things like that - from your control. But that's what Howzat! did. The Bangladesh of cricket simulations.



2. Skydive!

The sad lack of any gruesome death animations when you failed to open your parachute robbed this of perhaps its one potentially redeeming feature.



3. Cyberball

Pinball without any conception of physics. Nor one single table feature worthy of note. Pitiful.



4. Boss Rally

Not even Nintendo 64 owners were silly enough to make this tragically bad racing game a success. Glue down the accelerate key and win every race!

5. C&C: Sole Survivor

Westwood may have been guilty of squeezing the C&C franchise for every cent they could get, but let's get straight to the point: Sole Survivor was an incredibly, monumentally, mindbogglingly stupid idea.



6. Voyeur 2

Hilariously brilliant parody of Hitchcock's Rear Window or limp, trashy soft porn adventure with no gameplay. Discuss.



7. Corridor 7

You'll be cursing, "So am I in Corridor 7 or Corridor 7907? They all look the bloody same!" within moments of starting this dismal excuse for a first-person shooter.

8. Descent To Undermountain

It was probably the way the treasure you found and the creatures you killed both floated in mid-air that made us realise an RPG based on the Descent engine just wasn't going to work.

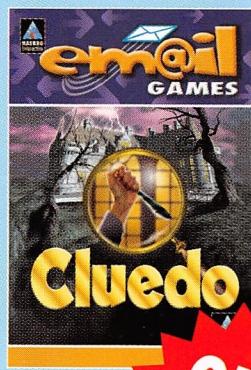
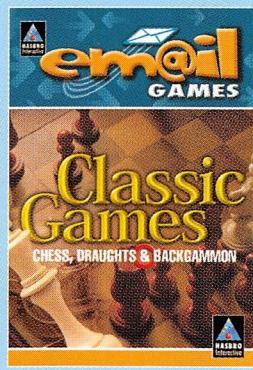
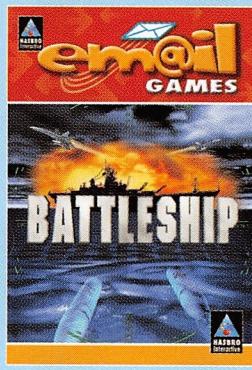
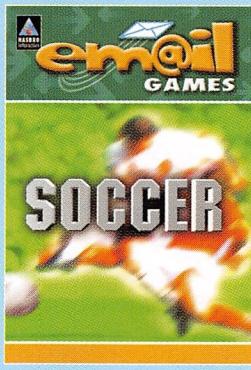
9. Echelon

Painfully generic real-time strategy, so unremarkable that we can't think of another word to say about it. Oh, except this: CRAP.

10. A Fork In The Tale

A Choose Your Own Adventure book on your PC, where you have about two seconds to make any decision. And if that's not bad enough, how about the worst plot in the history of gaming.

Stop playing with yourself in the office



ONLY
\$19.95

© 1999 Hasbro Interactive, Inc. All rights reserved.



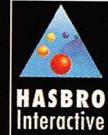
And start playing with your friends. Play games like you've never played before - **using email**.

They're fun, simple to install and easy to play. Make your move, add a friendly message and click "SEND".

Getting and sending email has never been so much fun.



Time to get your hands on e-mail games. Available now at all leading software retailers.
Check out the demo at www.emailgames.com



Capture the Spirit of Speed 1937...

This is a racing simulation like no other, recreating the classic years of legendary racers such as Mercedes, Bugatti, Alfa Romeo and Auto Union...



SPRIT OF SPEED 1937

Drive a choice of 15 real 1930's Grand Prix cars on famous high banked circuits like Brooklands and Monza. Take up the challenge in Single Race, Scenario or Complete Championship Season.

Once, you could only imagine the speed, danger and thrill... now you can live it!



CD-ROM

MICRO PROSE

